THE REVIVAL OF THERAVĀDA BUDDHISM AND ITS CONTRIBUTION TO NEPALESE SOCIETY

Phra Sujan Maharjan

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of
The Requirement for the Degree of
Master of Arts
(Buddhist Studies)

International Master's Degree Programme
Graduate School
Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University
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Phra Sujan Maharjan

Thesis Title: **The Revival of Theravāda Buddhism and Its Contribution to Nepalese Society**

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ABSTRACT

The objectives of this thesis are to study of the origin,development of Theravada Buddhism in Nepal along with its contributions to Nepalese Society. The results of the study are as follows: for many centuries, Nepal, the country where the Buddha was born, was unknown with Theravāda Buddhism, the oldest unbroken Buddhist tradition from the time of the Buddha. At the beginning of the 19th century the Theravāda was revived in Nepal, its country of origin, by the people of Nepal. Considered an alien faith, the men who initiated the Theravāda revival faced many difficulties from the society and from the Government of Nepal. They were imprisoned several times and exiled from the country for the offence of teaching Buddhism. However, through their strong dedication and belief in the Buddhist teachings, the Theravāda was finally reintroduced to Nepal. The revival campaign was strengthened by the Theravāda ordinations of Nepalese who then returned to Nepal as Theravāda missionaries. The

movement for the revival of Theravāda Buddhism in Nepal has played important roles in raising the awareness of the Nepalese and in the development of Nepalese society. Therefore, it has been a unique impact and contribution on society.

The establishment of Buddhist organizations, the support of the Government and the favour of the Kings were main factors in the promotion of Buddhism over a wide area. The establishment of Buddhist monasteries, Buddhist organizations, and Buddhist training centres, as well as international relationships were the main bases upon which the development of Theravāda Buddhism in Nepal was achieved. The contributions of Theravāda Buddhist countries to the Theravāda revival campaign in Nepal were indispensable and should not be forgotten.

Theravāda Buddhism contributes to Nepalese society in different aspects such as literature, education, social welfare and customs, along with others. The number of Buddhists is increasing day-by-day and the popularity of Buddhism has drawn attentions of the State into Buddhist activities. From an alien religion, Theravāda has become familiar to the society and integrated into the country and has won the hearts of people. Theravāda Buddhists are involved in various kinds of social work and are specialists in various corners of Nepalese society. Almost all the monks and nuns are involved in many different fields for the betterment of Nepalese society and for promotion of Buddhism for the welfare, goodness and happiness of the all. Theravāda Buddhism is flourishing and running in right track once again in the country where the Buddha was born.

List of Abbreviations

A.D. = Anno Domini

ANBM = Akhil Nepal Bhikkhu Mahasangha/ All Nepal Bhikkhu Association

B. C. = Before Christ

B. E. = Buddhist Era

BKK = Bangkok

Bkt = Bhaktapur

B. S. = Bikram Samvat

BPEC = Bauddha Pariyatti Education Council

C. E. = Common Era

Chap. = Chapter

Comp. = Compiled by

D.D. = Dharmāditya Dharmācārya

DVMC = Dharmashringa Vipassana Meditation Centre

Ed. = Editor/edition

Etc. = Et cetera / and others

Fig. = figure

JBR = Jung Bahadur Rana

JIABS = Journal of International Association of Buddhist Studies

IBMC = International Buddhist Meditation Centre

Ibid = Ibiden/ in the same page, i.e. same source which has been cited in the immediately preceding note

Illus. = Illustrator, illustrated by

Kath = Kathmandu

Lpr = Latitpur

MCU = Mahachulalongkorn University

NBPEC = Nepal Bauddha Pariyatti Education Council

NBPS = Nepal Bauddha Pariyatti Sikksya

N.S. = NEPAL SAMVAT

N.d. = No date

Op.cit. = Opere citato/ as referred

PGD = Post Graduate Degree

PPMV = Pranidhi Purna Mahavihara

SBTC = Sangharam Bhikkhu Training Centre

Sec. = Section

Tr. = Translator

T.U. = Tribhuwan University

Ven. = Venerable

Vol. = Volume

VSV = Vishwa Shanti Vihar

WFB = World Fellowship of Buddhist

Conversion Year

A. General system

1. Nepal Samvat + 937 = Bikram Samvat
2. Nepal Samvat + 880 = A. D.
3. Nepal Samvat + 1423 = Buddhist Era
4. A.D. + 57 = Bikram Samvat

B. Particular System

1. □ □ Nepal Samvat	+ 936 (Kartik- Caitra)	= Bikram Samvat
	+ 937 (Kartik – Aswin)	= Bikram Samvat

2. Nepal Samvat	+ 879 (Kartik –Pausa)	= A. D.
	+ 880 (Pausa – Aswin)	= A. D.
	+ 880 (Pausa- Aswin)	= A. D.
3. Nepal Samvat	+ 1422 (Vaisaka –Aswin)	= Buddhist Era
	+ 1423 (Kartik- Caitra)	= Buddha Era

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Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

1. Background and Significance of the Problem

The Kingdom of Nepal (Nepali: *Nepal Adhirājya*), lying along the southern slopes of the Himalayan mountain ranges, is located between India and Tibet, China. Nepal, long under the rule of hereditary Prime Ministers favouring a policy of isolation, remained closed to the outside world from 1846 until a Palace revolt in 1950 restored the Crown's authority in 1951. In 1991 the Kingdom established a multiparty parliamentary system[1] which continues to the present day.

Prince Siddhartha (Gotama the Buddha) of Kapilavatthu was born in Lumbini in the southern part of what is now Nepal about 2,600 years ago. Buddhist scriptures say that not only was the Buddha born in Nepal, but also that he returned several times to his hometown, Kapilavatthu. Although the Buddha was born in Nepal, the history of Theravāda Buddhism in Nepal is not entirely clear. However, the inscriptions of King Ashoka report that the Buddha was born in what is now Nepal. Later, King Ashoka sent missionaries into Nepal to propagate the Dhamma.[2] Later records of Chinese travellers dating from about 500 CE[3] indicate that Buddhism has been practiced continuously in Nepal from the time of Buddha to the present day: It never wholly disappeared from the country.[4]

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[1] **The New Encyclopedia Britannica, Vol. 24,** (U.S.A.: Library of Congress Catalog, 1993), p. 777.

[2] Ibid., 1993, p. 781.

[3] Samuel Beal, Si Yu Ri, **Buddhist Records of the Western World**, (New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 1994), pp. 80–81; Bhuwan Lal Pradhan, **Nepalama Buddhadharma**, (Kathmandu: Nepal Rajkiya Pragyapratisthana, 1988), pp. 102-103; Sathian Phothinantha, **Nepal; Jat Bhum Khong Phrabuddhachao**, (Bangkok: Mahamakut University, 2543 BE), pp. 57–58.

[4] Sathian Phothinantha, op. cit., 2543 BE, p. 1.

Nepal lost her original Buddhist identity about the thirteenth century in the time of King Jayasthiti Malla,[5] who imposed on Nepal a Hindu constitution. Against the political currents of the time, the Buddhists of Nepal tried to preserve Buddhist teachings in different ways. They found it necessary change their ascetic lifestyles for the lifestyle of the householder, and Buddhist doctrines were combined with those of Hinduism, leading to the development of Vajrayāna Buddhism (Newār Buddhism). In November 1846,[6] when the political system of Nepal changed from monarchy to autocracy, the country closed itself to the outside world. Nepalese Buddhists no longer had contact with Buddhists of other countries and thereby had no chance of re-establishing the Theravāda tradition. Moreover, Prime Minister Jung Bahādur *Rānā*, who was the first leader of the autocratic state, confiscated Buddhist temples and destroyed known copies of the Buddhist Canon.[7] In time, the Buddhists of modern Nepal came to believe that there was Buddhist monks only in wall paintings and that there were no living Buddhist monks left on the earth.[8]

Reviving Theravāda Buddhism in modern Nepal was a difficult task at the time of the autocratic state. At the end of the eighteenth century, Nepal entered the modern age and the country was opened to the outside world. Nepalese visitors to India were impressed by the success and zeal of the Mahābodhi Society (Founded by *Anāgārika Dharmapāla* (1864-1933)).[9] Having witnessed an active Buddhist organization and living monks in India, the Nepalese merchants, students, and pilgrims who met them realized that Buddhism was still a living tradition and they were thus encouraged to attempt to revive Theravāda Buddhism in Nepal. Since that time, contacts between the Mahābodhi Society and Theravāda Buddhists in Nepal have remained significant, and were vital in the revival of Buddhism in Nepal.

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[5] Nancy Grant, "The Monk Who Would Return", **The Nation: Thailand's English Language Newspaper (Sunday Special)**, Oct 18, 1987; N. B. Thapa, **A Short History of Nepal**, (Kathmandu: Ratna Pustak Bhandar, n.d.), pp. 30-33.

[6] N. B.Thapa, op. cit., p. 116.

[7] Prakash Bajracharya, **Baudhadarpan** (2nd ed.), (Kathmandu: Dharmakirti trust, 1996), p. 154.

[8]Venerable *Amritānanda*, **A Short History of Theravāda Buddhism in Modern Nepal,** 3rd ed., (Kathmandu: Ananda Kuti Vihāra Trust, 1986), p. 1.

[9] Ria Kloppenborg, "Theravāda Buddhism in Nepal", **Kailash: A Journal of Himalayan Studies**, vol. 5, no. 4, 1977, p. 302.

Prof. V. V. Gokhale writes, "Students of Buddhism have given the Theravāda Buddhist movement a kick start in Nepal."[10] *Dharmāditya Dharmācārya*, who went to India for study, began the movement about 1923 in India. There he came into contact with *Anāgārika Dharmapāla* and studied Buddhism under him. He dedicated his life to the promotion and revival of Theravāda Buddhism. He wrote some influential articles and established the Buddha Dharma Uddhāra Sangha and the Nepal Buddhopasaka Sangha, among other organizations.[11] In the 1920s he and others spend time in India and other countries acquiring education and seeking the support that they would need for in their increasing desire to revive and protect Buddhism in the country of its birth.[12] In time, Nepalese monks were ordained by Venerable U Chandramani Mahāsthavir, a Myanmar Theravāda monk living in India. Having gained an adequate knowledge of Theravāda Buddhism some of these monks returned to Nepal as the first Theravāda Buddhist *dhammadutas* in modern times.

Theravāda emphasizes the rational elements of Buddhism and the Theravāda monks propagating Buddhism in Nepal tended therefore to point to the rationality and purity of their practices in comparison with the rituals of Newār Buddhism, the Buddhism that was indigenous to Nepal at the beginning of the modern era. Nevertheless, the Theravādins did not directly criticise the Newār rites and rituals, but rather cooperated with the Newār Buddhists while offering a shifted emphasis. In a short time, the news that monks were collecting alms in the streets became widely known to the people of Nepal. Monks taught increasing numbers of the laity and a good number of people began to take part in the religious activities of the *vihāras*. At this point, the police initiated surveillance of the Buddhist movement and in November 1931, the police arrested numbers of Buddhists. Some of the Buddhists were expelled from the country; others were fined for distributing Dhamma pamphlets or for collecting alms on the streets. However, the Theravāda revival movement continued to expand. Those who were exiled to India established a Nepalese Buddhist society, the Dharmodaya Sabhā, in 1944 in Sāranāth[13] in support of the Theravāda revival movement in Nepal. The monks and

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[10] P. V. Bapat (ed.), **2500 Years of Buddhism**, (New Delhi: Motilal Publications, 1959), p. 84.

[11] B. P. Lakaul, **Nepalay Sthaviravada Gukathan Wagu Kha**, (Kathmandu: Hisi Press, Nepal, B.S.2042), pp. 44-50.

[12] Ria Kloppenborg, 1977, op. cit., p. 304.

[13] Venerable *Amritānanda*, 1986, op. cit., pp. 7-8.

nuns as well as the laity played a large role in the revival of Theravāda Buddhism in Nepal. In time, with the help of the Dharmodaya Sabhā and of existing Theravāda countries, Theravāda Buddhism was established in modern Nepal. In a short period, Theravāda Buddhism spread widely throughout the country due to the firm determination and dedication of the early monks and their lay supporters.

Today, Theravāda Buddhism plays important roles in different fields within Nepalese society, for example in literature, education, social welfare, and culture. Moreover, the revival of Theravāda Buddhism in Nepal stimulated the already existing Newār Buddhist societies to make greater efforts in propagating their own understanding of Buddhism.

The present thesis focuses on the revival of Theravāda Buddhism and its contribution to Nepalese society, identifying the processes and forces through which the revival took place, its development, and implications for the post-revival period. There is only a limited quantity of documents and of prior research on the revival of Theravāda Buddhism in Nepal and there is very little available published information on its contribution to Nepalese society.

2. Objectives of the Study

1. To study the historical background of Theravāda Buddhism and its revival in modern Nepal

2. To study the development of Theravāda Buddhism in modern Nepal.

3. To analyse Theravāda's contributions to Nepalese society.

3. Statements of the Problems

1. What was the history of Buddhism in Nepal before the modern age? How has it been revived in modern Nepal?

2. When was Theravāda Buddhism re-introduced to modern Nepal? How did it develop in modern Nepal?

3. How has Nepalese society been influenced by the revival of Theravāda Buddhism; what significant roles does the Sangha play in society? What is the contribution to Nepalese society?

4. Definition of Terms used in the Thesis

Modern Nepal: Nepal from beginning of nineteenth century and the regime of Prime Minister Jung Bahādur *Rānā*, who established the autocratic system of government. The nineteenth century was the century of first significant contact with European powers. Theravāda Buddhism was re-established in 1924 under the autocratic State. Theravāda Buddhism is now widely accepted by the Nepalese people throughout the country.

Theravāda: "Doctrine of the elders", the oldest extant form of the Buddha's teachings, handed down to us in the *Pāli* language. According to tradition, Theravāda is the only one of the earliest schools of Buddhism (which Mahayanists have called Hinayana) to have survived. Theravāda is sometimes called Southern Buddhism or *Pāli* Buddhism. It is the dominant form of Buddhism in Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Thailand, Cambodia, and Laos.

Kathmandu Valley: This valley is one of the largest valleys in modern Nepal. It contains three large cities: Kathmandu, the capital, Bhaktapur, and Patan (Lalitpur). Kathmandu Valley was known as Nepal in ancient times. This valley is most important for Buddhism. Traditionally, Most of the people there are Buddhists, and Theravāda Buddhism was revived among them with the rational elements of Buddhist teachings. Today, Theravāda Buddhism is centred in Kathmandu, from which it promotes Buddhism throughout the country. Buddhist Temples and organizations have been established here for the sake of propagating of Buddhism.

***Bhante* (*Pāli*):** "Venerable sir", a respectful term of address for Theravāda monks; also used colloquially as a third person pronoun: the *bhantes*, meaning Theravāda monks.

***Anāgārikā*:** The term used in Nepal to refer to women who take the Ten Precepts and wear monastic robes; the equivalent of the Sri

Lankan *dasasilamata*, the Myanmar *thilashin*, and the Thai *maechee* (who may take eight precepts rather than ten).

5. Survey of Related Literature and Research

Theravāda Buddhism was introduced to Nepal less than 80 years ago; therefore, there is not much literature on the subject.

Amritānanda, *Bhikkhu*. **A Short History of Theravāda Buddhism in Modern Nepal**, 3rd edition, (Kathmandu: Ananda Kuti Vihāra Trust, 1986).

This book describes the principle events and activities of the modern revival of Theravāda Buddhism in Nepal. *Bhikkhu* Amritanada's dedication and the establishment of Dharmodaya Shabha and its important role reviving Theravāda Nepal are discussed. *Bhikkhu* Maitri, the publisher, writes that;

> This book records memories of the Major events since the time of the expulsion of Theravāda Buddhist monks from Nepal. However, it is not the detailed historical account of Theravāda Buddhism in Nepal. A few unhappy experiences of the Buddhist monks in the recent past have also been mentioned here. In spite of all these development, the Buddhist will be able to have in this volume and idea of the efforts being made to firmly establish the Theravāda Buddhism in Nepal. [14]

Ria Kloppenborg, "Theravāda Buddhism in Nepal", **The Kailash**, vol. 5, Kathmandu, 1977, pp. 301-321.

Kloppenborg's article outlines the main historical events of the Theravāda revival movement and its development in modern Nepal. It discusses the personal dedication of the early monks, the formation of Buddhist organizations and their efforts to revive Theravāda Buddhism. The article discusses the monks' and nuns' studies abroad, such as in Myanmar, Sri Lanka, and Thailand and the ways in which Buddhist countries helped to promote Theravāda in Nepal. Although most of the monks and nuns as well as lay people were Newār Buddhists, the monks

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[14] Bhikkhu Maitri, Secretary of Ananda Kuti Vihāra Trust, Publisher's Note.

were not participating in rituals that had Mahayana origins but chanting *paritta* (Sanskrit, *paritran*) on different occasions. The article notes that education and training in Myanmar, Sri Lanka, and Thailand, influenced the monks' activities and motivated them to adopt "new" traditions.

Baikunthaprasada Lacoul, **Nepalya Sthavirvada Gukathan Wagu Kha?**, **(**Kathmandu: Hisi Press, 1985 (BS 2042).

Lacoul discusses *Dharmapāla*'s efforts to re-establish Buddhism in India and the interest of the Nepalese in the Mahābodhi Society. He describes events beginning with birth of *Dharmāditya Dharmācārya* and others who played early roles in the revival of Theravāda Buddhism in Nepal. The movement introduceding the original Buddhist teachings to Nepal included Buddhist missionaries who were both monks and laity. An account of the first monk teaching Buddhism on the streets of Kathmandu Valley is included. The book covers the Theravāda tradition and the initial activities of the efforts to revive and propagate Theravāda Buddhism in modern Nepal. Lacoul also discusses the contributions of the reinstated Theravāda to Nepalese society.

Sathian Phothinantha, **Nepal: Jat Bhum Khong Phrabuddhachao**, **(**Bangkok: Mahamakut University Press, 2543).

From the beginning of the twentieth century, Thai Buddhist scholars have been interested in modern Nepal as the birthplace of the Buddha. This book offers a brief history of Nepal and Buddhism. Phothinanta maintains that Nepal is the only country from which Buddhism never disappeared, but that because of changing phenomena the original teaching was lost. Buddhist teachings were combined with those of other religions in order to preserve the Buddhist teachings. The book concludes with a short introduction of the development of Theravāda Buddhism in modern Nepalese society and its contributions to that society.

Min Bahādur Shakya, **A Short History of Buddhism in Nepal**, (Lalitpur, Nepal: Young Buddhist Association of Nepal, 1986).

This book is a history of Buddhism in Nepal. It begins with the state of Buddhism in Nepal just after the *Parinibbana* of the Buddha and continues with a survey of Buddhism in ancient Nepal. Buddhism in

Nepal benefited by early contacts with Tibet (ca. 650 – 900 CE). The historical development of Newār Buddhist ritual is included along with negative influences on Nepalese Buddhism in the later period. The book includes a short introduction to those in the modern period who initially dedicated themselves to the revival Theravāda Buddhism in Nepal and discusses the founding of important Theravāda associations and their contributions to Nepalese society.

6. Methodology of Research

This research focuses on Theravāda Buddhism in Nepal, mainly focusing on the present situation of Theravāda Buddhism and its contributions to Nepalese society. This research was limited to the Kathmandu Valley area. The research included documentary study and fieldwork, divided into four stages:

1. Collecting data from primary and secondary sources

2. Observing Buddhist ceremonies, daily activities of Buddhists, conducting surveys in Buddhist centres, and the like. Interviews were conducted with relevant persons, both monks, including senior monks and Sangha administrators, and laity, including leaders of Buddhist associations and others, in order to clarify the revival, development and contribution of Theravāda Buddhism to Nepalese society.

3. Analysing and systematizing the data yielding a clear picture of the problems.

4. Formulating conclusions, identifying significant results, and areas needing further research.

7. Expected Benefits

1. A better understanding of the origins of Theravāda Buddhism and the movement for its revival in modern Nepal.

2. Knowledge of the processes of development may provide guidelines for further propagation in Nepal, and for fostering relationships between Nepal and other Theravāda countries.

3. A better understanding of the present situation of Theravāda Buddhism, including the roles of the Sangha and its contribution to Nepalese society.

Chapter II

History of Theravāda Buddhism and Its Revival in Modern Nepal

Introduction

The Kingdom of Nepal (Nepali: *Nepal Adhirājya*), lying along the southern slopes of the Himalayan Mountains, is located between India to the East, South and West and Tibet, China to the North. It covers an area of 56,827 square miles and has a population of over 22.9 million (UN 2005). From 1846, Nepal was ruled by hereditary prime ministers favouring isolation, and remained closed to the outside world until a Palace revolt beginning in 1950 restored the Crown's authority in 1951. In 1991 the Kingdom established a multiparty parliamentary system which continues in force to the present day.

Nepal contains some of the most rugged and difficult mountain terrain in the world. Mountains cover roughly 75% of the country. From South to North, the country can be divided into four regions. These are: the *tarai*, low, fertile land; the valleys, the hilly region between the Mahabharata Range, and the Great Himalayas; and The Great Himalaya Range, rising to more than 29,000 feet.[15]

Nepal's weather is influenced by elevation as well as by its location in subtropical latitudes. The climate ranges from subtropical monsoon conditions in the *tarai*, through a warm temperate climate at between 4,000 and 7,000 feet in the mid-mountain region, to cool temperate conditions in the higher parts of mountains, between 7,000 and 11,000 feet, and to an alpine climate at altitudes between 14,000 and 16,000 feet along the lower slopes of the Himalaya Mountains. At

[15] N. B.Thapa, **A Short History of Nepal**, (Kathmandu: Ratna Pustak Bhandar, n.d.), pp. 30 –33.

altitudes above 16,000 feet the temperature is always below freezing and the surface covered by snow and ice.[16]

Nepal includes a rich variety of linguistic, ethnic, and religious patterns. It has a number of ethnic groups each with its own language, such as, for example, *Chetree, Newār, Tharus, Tamang, Rai, and Limbu*. The national language, Nepali, is spoken throughout the country.

2.1 History of Nepal

The history of Nepal dates back to the time before the Buddha's birth in 623 BCE and is divided into many periods. Most scholars roughly divide the history of the country into three periods: A. Ancient, B. Medieval and C. Modern.

A. Ancient Nepal

The popular history of Nepal begins with Buddhist legends. However, the early history began with the migration of mongoloid groups from Tibet known as Kirats, and of Indo-Aryan groups from Northern India. Recorded history has the Kirats arriving in Nepal from the East in the seventh or eighth century BCE.[17] This was the period of the birth of Gotama the Buddha, who was born in the Western part of Nepal and whose teachings had a great deal of influence upon the religious and social life of the people. He is memorialised by one of King Ashoka's famous column inscriptions, at Lumbini, and there are several Buddhist shrines in the Kathmandu Valley.[18]

A coherent dynastic history of Nepal Valley appears in approximately the fourth or fifth century of the Common Era, with the rise of the Licchavi dynasty, probably the first ruling family in the valley. Numerous stone inscriptions in the valley supplement the chronicles of that dynasty. Under the Licchavis, Nepal was unified as a great kingdom extending into parts of present-day Tibet. The Himalayan passes to the north of the valley were opened. Nepal became the major intellectual and

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[16] **The New Encyclopedia Britannica**, vol. 24, (USA: Library of Congress Catalog, 1993), pp. 777-779.

[17] Ibid., p. 781; Nagendra K. R. Singh, **International Encyclopedia of Buddhism**, vol. 48, (New Delhi: Anamol Publishing Pvt. Ltd., 1999), p. 2.

[18] Nagendra K. R. Singh, 1999, op. cit., pp. 10 –13.

commercial centre between South and Central Asia during the reign of King *Mānadeva* (464-506 CE).[19] The last king of this dynasty had no son. His son-in-law Amshuvarma from Thakuri Vamsa took the throne, initiating the Thakuri dynasty around 606-622 CE. He was a patron of the arts, science, and literature,[20] and his reign is termed a golden age in all respects by modern historians. For Buddhist society, he was not only an illustrious king, but also a strong patron of Buddhism. Himself a Buddhist, Buddhists heartily praised him as an ornament of the Buddhist *vihāras* in Nepal. The people also expressed their wishes of Buddhahood for the King.[21] Besides local sources, a Chinese source says that there were two thousand Buddhist monks of both vehicles at the time of King Amshuvarma.[22]

According to a Tibetan source, his daughter, Princess Bhrikuti, married a Tibetan King named Srong tsen Gamp (617-650 CE) and took Buddha images with her to Tibet. She was said to have been a reincarnation of a Tibetan Bodhisattva named Green Tara.[23] After the demise of King Amshuvarma, King Narendradeva and subsequent kings continued to support the activities of Buddhism. A number of inscriptions from this dynasty indicate that most of the Kings and the people were Buddhist devotees and supported Buddhist activities. Some scholars maintain that every form of Buddhism, Theravāda, Mahayana, and Vajrayāna, was equally active in Nepal at that time.

B. Medieval Period

The Mallas migrated from Kusinagara, Pawa and the neighbourhood of Vaishali and settled near the Gandhaki River. The Changunarayan inscription commemorates the triumphant campaign of King Manadeva against a city of the Mallas. After a long struggle with the Licchavi, the medieval period began in 1207 CE with the reign of

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[19] Naresh Man Bajracharya, **Buddhism in Nepal**, (Delhi : Eastern Book linkers, 1998), p. 21-23; **The New Encyclopedia Britanica**, vol. 24, 1993, op. cit., p. 781.

[20] Naresh Man Bajracharya, 1998, op. cit., p. 27; N. B. Thapa, op. cit., pp. 16–17.

[21] D. V. Vajracharya, **Licchavikalina Abhilekha,** (Nepali), (Kirtipur, 1973, Ins No. 881), p. 368.

[22] Samuel Beal, Si Yu Ri, 1994, op. cit., pp. 80-81; Bhuwan Lal Pradhan, **Nepalama Buddhadharma,** (Kathmandu: Nepal Rajkiya Pragyapratisthana, 1988), pp. 102-103; Sathian Phothinantha, **Nepal: Jat Bhum Khong Phrabuddhachao,** (Bangkok: Mahamakut University, 2543 BE), pp. 57-58.

[23] Naresh Man Bajracharya, 1998, op. cit., p. 28.

Arimalla Deva, the first king of the Malla dynasty.[24] This seems to have been the beginning of a golden age of Buddhism. Buddhism expanded beyond the Valley. One of the kings, King Ripu Malla, travelled to Kathmandu Valley, Kapilavatthu, and Lumbini around 1312-1313 CE. Almost all the kings of this dynasty were devoted to Buddhism and King Pratapmalla, grandson of King Ripu Malla ordained as a Buddhist monk. It is believed that he was the first king to have ordained as a Buddhist monk in the history of Nepal. As King he gave his full support and patronage to Buddhism. Most subsequent kings supported Buddhism and some also ordained as Buddhist monks.[25]

However, in 1350 CE King Jayasthiti Malla changed the history of Nepal. He tried to re-organize society on the model of the Code of Manu, a Hindu law book which enjoins strict adherence to the caste system, and effected many administrative reforms.[26] He suppressed Buddhism and introduced the caste system in Nepal. Buddhist culture and traditions were terminated and the lineage of celibate monks came to an end. Hinduism became the dominant religion. His reign initiated an age of darkness in the history of Buddhism in Nepal.

In medieval times with the support of some prominent and powerful kings Buddhism developed to a high level and became the dominant religion in the land. It was then forced into decline by rulers hostile to it.

C. Modern Nepal

In 1768 King Prithavi Narayan Shah of Gorkha conquered the Valley and neighbouring states. He moved his capital to Kathmandu Valley making Kathmandu the capital city of modern Nepal.[27] King Prithavi Narayan Shah united Nepal and laid the foundations for a unified kingdom. He became master of the whole of Nepal. However, he did not live long enough to reap the benefits of his victory. Two sons Pratap Singh Shah and Bahādur Shah survived him. King Prithavi Narayan Shah holds a high place in the history of Nepal. He brought Nepal from the

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[24] N. B. Thapa, op. cit., pp. 23-25.

[25] Phra Vipassi Dhammaramo, **Buddhism in Nepal,** (Bangkok: A M.A. Thesis submited to Mahamakut University, 2001), p. 26.

[26] N. B. Thapa, op. cit., pp. 30-33.

[27] Ibid., pp. 68-72.

Medieval into the Modern age, and established the Shah dynasty, which continues to this day.[28]

Prime Minister Jung Bahādur *Rānā* eliminated the anti-British Thapa, Pande, and Chautaria in the Kot massacre and initiated a policy of isolationism. The British were pleased with the Kot massacre and with Jung Bahādur who was an ally. He cultivated the friendship with visits to Europe in 1850, and was the first Nepalese ruler to visit England. Queen Victoria received him kindly. After his return from Europe, Nepal entered its Modern period. Jung Bahādur introduced many civil and military reforms following the models he had seen and studied in England. For example he implemented a new system of law, with audit laws for checking public accounts and discouraging the practice of *sati* (the self immolation of the widow on her husband's funeral pyre). He turned his attention to developing factories, roads, and communications; old roads were repaired and a postal system was established. He promulgated regulations preserving Hindu temples and Buddhist *vihāras* and made laws prohibiting the removal of religious artefacts from the country.[29] The *Rānā* regime was a traditional patrimonial state and the *Rānā* aristocracy continued for 104 years. They believed that the country belonged to them as their own personal kingdom and that the national resources and the people existed to satisfy them.

In 1950, King Tribhuvan, who was to introduce a democratic political system in Nepal, overthrew the *Rānā* isolationist regime. The first general public election was held in 1959. The Nepali Congress Party won an overwhelming victory and was entrusted with the formation of Nepal's first popular government. However, there was contention between the King and the cabinet, and King Mahendra dismissed the Government in 1960, and the constitution of 1959 was abolished in 1962. A new constitution was drawn up which provided for non-party system of councils, known as *Panchayat*, in which the king exercises sole power. The first elections of the Rastriya Panchayat were held in 1963.

King Mahendra died in 1972. He was succeeded by king Birendra, who gave full authority to political parties in 1991, and a

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[28] Nagendra K. R. Singh, **International Encyclopedia of Buddhism,** Op.cit., p. 3; N. B. Thapa, op. cit., pp. 68-79.

[29] Ibid., pp. 113-120; The visit to England evidently brought about a change of heart: before the visit, *Rānā* destroyed many Buddhist scriptures though some Buddhist scriptures had already been taken to England by a Briton.

general public election was held. Since then Nepal has had constitutional government.[30] The present monarch, King Gyanendra, acceded the throne in 2001, after 1 June when King Birendra, Queen Aishwarya, and other close relatives were killed in a shooting spree. In 2001 on 4 June, Prince Gyanendra was crowned King of Nepal after the late King Birendra's son, Dipendra, who had been declared King on 2 June, died of injuries sustained in the Palace shooting.

2.2. Origins of Theravāda Buddhism in Nepal

Theravāda Buddhism[31] in modern Nepal was introduced about 80 years ago. Since, then it has emerged as a major force in modern Nepal. It plays significant roles in different fields of Nepalese society and Buddhists have begun to engage in both traditional and modern activities. Even though it re-emerged only few decades ago, the origins of Theravāda Buddhism in Nepal are to be found in the time of Gotama the Buddha. The Buddha, the founder of Buddhism, was born in Lumbini, within the borders of present-day Nepal. Very early in its history, then, important Buddhist events occurred on the southern plains of Nepal. There are many references in ancient *Pāli* literature of Buddhist activities held in and near Kapilavatthu, the Buddha's hometown.[32] The Buddhist scriptures say that not only was the Buddha born in what is now Nepal, but also visited his home several times after he had become the Buddha.

Although the Buddha was born in Nepal, the history of Theravāda Buddhism in Nepal does not become clear until the 20th century. There are monasteries and stupas spread in different parts of the country but due to lack of records or clear evidence, it is difficult to say when they were built. Historians have identified the Stupa of Yogini in Gumvihara at Sankhu, Kathmandu as the oldest stupa in Kathmandu Valley. It is generally believed that the origin of this *vihāra* dates to the time of the early introduction of Buddhism in ancient times, around the first century CE. Harishchandra Lal Singha, a historian, says "Theravāda

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[30] **The New Encyclopedia Britannica, Vol. 24**, 1993, op. cit., p. 782-783.

[31] Theravāda, "the doctrine of the elders", is the oldest extant form of the Buddha's teachings, and has been handed down to us in the Pali language (Nyanatiloka, **Buddhist Dictionary: Manual of Buddhist Terms and Doctrines, 3rd ed.,** (Taiwan: The Corporate Body of the Buddha Educational Foundation), p. 179).

[32] Phra Vipassi, 2001, op. cit., p. 9; G. P. Malalasekera, **Dictionary of Pali Proper Names,** vol. 1, (New Delhi: Oriental Books Reprint Corporation, 1983), p. 516; Triratna Manandhar, "Presence of Buddhism in Nepal", **Lumbini; A Journal of the LNBDS UK**, Vol. 8, May 2005, p. 15.

was the earliest form of Buddhism prevalent in Nepal as in many countries of Asia where Buddhism flourished."[33] However, traditional Theravāda texts do not contain any information about Theravāda in Nepal. The texts of other Buddhist schools, nevertheless, say that some of the Buddha's disciples went to Nepal's Kathmandu Valley.

Kathmandu Valley was developed as a trade centre from the fifth or sixth century BCE. It was famous for its woollen clothing and Indian traders used to visit the area for business and transactions. The Mulasarvasativada text, **Vinayasangraha**,[34] mentions that monks came to Kathmandu with the traders. Moreover, it indicates that some of the Sakyas came to the Kathmandu Valley, and that Venerable Ananda, attendant of the Buddha, visited his relatives in Nepal.[35] The Text says:

> Once the lord Buddha was in Savatthi (Srawasti), a group of traders told to the monks, "Venerable sirs, the land of Nepal is mostly stone and high as a camel's back. We are sure that your journey will be comfortable."…They arrived in the Kathmandu Valley but could not remain for long because of the bitterly cold weather.[36]

On the other hand, the Theravāda Canon recounts in detail how King Vidhudaba of Kosala destroyed Kapilavatthu and Dewadaha before the end of the Buddha's life, in around 491 BCE. It says that many Sakyas migrated away from Kapilavatthu because of King Vidhudaba's attack. Among the Sakyas leaving Kapilavatthu at least one went to Kathmandu Valley. The Mulasaravasativadin **Vinaya** claims further:

> Venerable Ananda, the famous disciple of the Buddha's family went to Nepal [Kathmandu Valley]. Those who could fled to Nepal, where they, however, suffered from the effects of the cold temperate climate of Nepal. Venerable Ananda was requested through the merchants to visit them. He visited Nepal and

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[33] Harishchandra Lal Singh, **Buddhism in Nepal; A Brief Histocial Introduction**, (Kathmandu: Ratna Pustak Bhandar, 1999), p. 16.

[34] **Mulasarvastivadinvinayasanghra** or **Mool-Sarwastivada-winaya Samgraha**, an early seventh century work of Jinamitra, translated by Itsing (671-695 CE).

[35] Bhuwan Lal Pradhan, **The Sakyas of Nepal,** (Kathmandu: Sri Kirt Vihāra, 1985), pp. 6-7; Bhuwan Lal Pradhan, **Buddha Dharma ra Sakyaharoo**, (Kathmandu: Ganamaha Vihāra, 2529 BE), pp. 63ff.

[36] Bhuwan Lal Pradhan, **Nepalma Buddhadharma**, (Kathmandu: Nepal Rajkiya Pragyapratisthana, 1988), pp. 30-32. My translation from the Nepali.

suffered bitterly from frostbite. On his return to Srawasti the other disciples were grieved to find Ananda with his limbs disfigured due to frostbite.

Venerable Ananda said, "The Kingdom of Nepal is next to the Himalayan Mountains. My feet and hands are in this state because of the wind and the snow."[37] This shows that Kathmandu was a well-known centre for traders of wool and ornaments. They used to visit here for business proposes. In this respect, it can be said that Buddhism entered Kathmandu Valley in three ways: through monks, traders, and immigrants. References to Nepal Valley and Nepal's lower hill areas are found in the ancient Indian classics, suggesting that the central Himalayan hills were closely related culturally and politically to the Gangetic Plain at least 2,500 years ago. Lumbini, Gotama the Buddha's Birthplace in southern Nepal and Nepal Valley also figure prominently in Buddhist accounts. There is substantial archaeological evidence of an early Buddhist influence in Nepal, The Sakyas of Kapilavatthu continued to migrate into Kathmandu Valley at different times and in different groups for business and other purposes. Especially after the massacre perpetrated by King Vidhudava, a large number of Sakyas came as refugees and settled permanently. Some scholars hold the view that not only the Sakyas of Kapilavatthu but also the Mallas and Licchavis who inhabited outlying areas of Nepal in the Buddha's time, went to the valley at first for business proposes and later as refugees–and that in the course of time they succeeded in occupying its very throne becoming the Malla and Licchavi dynasties of Nepal's medieval period.

Thus, we know that the Sakyas had by the fifth century BCE migrated into the Valley more than once, and that *bhikkhus* and merchants from ancient India freely came into the Valley. Theravāda Buddhism in Nepal, then, begins with the birth of the Buddha and the visits of his disciples and of merchants to the Valley. These are some of the facts that indicate that from the time of the Buddha, Nepal was influenced by Buddhism and that Buddhism was widely practiced by the people. These facts indicate that these groups helped to establish Buddhism in the Valley and to spread it far and wide beyond the Valley.

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[37] Bhuwan Lal Pradhan, **The Sakyas of Nepal**, op. cit., p. 8-9.

2.2.1. Emperor King Ashoka and his Dhammaduta

The status of Theravāda Buddhism in Nepal after the Buddha is still not clear, but there is substantial archaeological evidence of early Buddhist influence, including myths, important literary works, a famous Ashokan inscribed column at Lumbini, and several shrines in the Valley.[38] That King Ashoka the Emperor frequently visited Lumbini the birthplace of the Buddha is a historical fact.

King Ashoka made a pilgrimage with Venerable Upagupta after the Third Buddhist council. He visited Lumbini, the birthplace of the Buddha and erected an inscribed pillar to commemorate the Buddha's birth, an important landmark in the history of Buddhism.[39] The pillar inscription in Lumbini reads as follows:

> King Piyadasi [Ashoka] the beloved of Devas, in the Twentieth year of the coronation, himself made a royal visit the Buddha Sakyamuni having been born here, a stone railing was built and a stone pillar erected. The Bhagavan having been born here, Lumbini village was taxfreed and entitled to the eight parts.[40]

It is said that in the 20th year after his accession to the throne of the Maurya Dynasty, and following the Third Buddhist Council, the King made pilgrimages to historic places of Buddhist interest and erected stone pillars. He is also said to have visited Nepal Valley. Dr. D. Wright writes that the Emperor, King Ashoka, visited Kathmandu Valley at the time of the fourteenth Kirati King Sthungko of the Kirat dynasty with his spiritual guide Venerable Upagupta, Queen Tissyarakshita, and a daughter named Carumati.[41] The place where he stayed was later called "Ashokapattana" or the place where the King of Patna named Ashoka lived. But some say that King Ashoka himself established Ashokapattana City (now, Patan, Lalitpur) and built a stupa in each of the four corners of the city. His daughter married the prince of Kathmandu, Devapal, and lived in Ashokapattana. She built a Buddhist temple named Carumati

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[38] **The New Encyclopidea Britannica**, 1993, op. cit., 781.

[39] P. V. Bapat, **2500 Years of Buddhism,** (New Delhi: Government of India, 1997), p. 73.

[40] Radhakumud Mookerji, **Ashoka,** 3rd Edition, (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1968), pp. 201-204, 244-245, from: **Lumbini Ashok Inscription Nepal** (Lumbini Dharmaodaya Committee, Buddha vihāra, Lumbini, Nepal), (Kathmandu: Nepal press, n.d.).

[41] D. Wright, **History in Nepal**, (Cambridge, 1877), pp. 111-113.

(Presently in Chabahil). In their old age they ordained as monk and nun and lived out their lives at this *vihāra*.[42] The Chabahil inscription tells of the temple in detail with a *Kinnari Jataka* story. According to Divyavadan, King Ashoka's pilgrimage started at Lumbini. Thence he went south rather than north, the way to Kathmandu Valley. However, the inscription found at Chabahil is one of the oldest inscriptions in Nepal. On the other hand, Ashoka's inscription is silent about the names of Arahat Mahindra and Sanghamitra who went to Sri Lanka for the propagation of Buddhism. Nevertheless, the inscription at Prayag Kosam gives a name, "Karubaki", and scholars speculate that King Ashoka might have had a daughter named Carumati (Karubaki=Carumaki=Charumti?). She, Carumati who married a Nepalese prince, built a Buddhist monastery that exists still today.[43] It has become a Theravāda centre in Nepal and a Theravāda monk is in charge of the renovation of the temple and stupas. It is believed that Buddhist monasteries existed in Nepal before that time, as the Buddha had permitted monks to build their own residences.[44]

A. King Ashoka's Missionary in Kathmandu Valley

What is now Nepal was known as the Mighty Himalayan Region from ancient times. The area, which we call Nepal today, at that time, was called *Himavanta Padesh* or *Himavathakhanda*.[45] There is clear evidence that King Ashoka sent cultural messengers to nine different places, in Asia and the Middle East. According to the Mahavamsa, a Sinhalese chronicle dated to the fifth or sixth century, Ashoka's missionaries reached to Kathmandu as the Himalayan missionary team of five monks with the Arahant Majjima as leader.[46] They went to Himavanta Pradesh as *dhammaduta* and taught the *Dhammacakkappavatana Sutta* to the Nepalese. The Nepalese were pleased with the teachings and accepted Buddhism in their daily lives. It is said that most of the inhabitants already knew Buddhism through the migration of Sakyas, Mallas, Licchavis, and traders to Nepal from India.

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[42] Bhuwan Lal Pradhan, op. cit., p. 64-66; **The New Encyclopedia Britannica**, op. cit., 781.

[43] Bhikkhu *Sudarshan*, "Nepal Upatyakama Ashoka ki Chori Carumati", **The Carumati Voice**, (Kathmandu: Carumati Buddhist Mission, 2001), p. 20; Dhanabajra Vajracharya, "Chabahil ko Abhiledha (inscription of Chabahil)", **The Carumati Voice**, (Kathmandu: Carumati Buddhist Mission, 2001), pp. 17-20.

[44] P. V. Bapat, 1956, op. cit., p. 83.

[45] Phra Vipassi, 2001, op. cit., p. 13.

[46] Harishchandra Lal Singh, 1999, op. cit., p. 7.

Some scholars accept that those who migrated from Kapilavatthu and other places of classical India originated Nepal's culture, art, and architecture. When the missionaries of King Ashoka arrived in the Valley, they gave Dhamma discourses that were easy for the Nepalese to understand and to practice. It said that in time these missionary monks went to different parts of the Valley to further propagate Buddhism.

These facts concerning King Ashoka's visit to Nepal and his successful Dhamma propagation mission, yields a clear picture of Buddhism in Nepal and how far it had influenced Nepalese society in the early period. Given the history of the Buddhist Councils, it is certain that the form of Buddhism, which flourished under King Ashoka, was Theravāda Buddhism. Based on these facts, it can be said that from the Buddha and continuing until after the time of King Ashoka, Nepal was influenced by Theravāda Buddhism and that the people of Nepal continued to practice it. Therefore, there is no doubt that Buddhism had spread from the beginning, from the Buddha's visit to his birthplace and from the visits of his main disciples and others. Besides that, the great Buddhist scholar Venerable Vasubandu visited Nepal in order to propagate Buddhism around the fourth century.[47] Since that day, it can be said that Buddhism has had a close relationship with the Nepalese and the history of Buddhism in Nepal becomes clearer.

2.2.2. Chinese travellers

Buddhism in Nepal was practiced continually from the beginning, but some periods are clearer than others. There is some evidence concerning King Ashoka and his works. However, there are no facts indicating that the Nepalese themselves played a role in Buddhist propagation. Around the seventh century, the history of Buddhism turned for the better and the King of that time supported it. This was a time when Buddhism was practiced widely throughout the country and began to spread to neighbouring countries such as Tibet. This was the time of King Amshuvarma the Great. Nepal was proud to be the land of the Buddha's birthplace and was not less responsible for the spread of Buddhism to Tibet as well. King Amshuvarma is responsible for the spread of Buddhism to Tibet. His daughter, princess Brikuti married King Sron-

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[47] Bhikkhu Medhankar, **Asiyake Mahan Baudha Samrats,** (Nagapur: Buddha Bhumi Prakasan, n.d.), p. 59.

btsam-sgam-po of Tibet, and through her Buddhism spread further into Tibet.

A study of Buddhism in ancient India and Nepal cannot be complete without the works and records of King Ashoka. Similarly, such study must not neglect the records of Chinese travellers such as Venerable Fa-hien (399-414 CE),[48] Venerable Hiuen Tsiang (Xuan Zang) (602-664), and Venerable Itsing (635-713), among others. One of the most well known travellers was Hiuen Tsiang,[49] who recorded his seventeen-year journey through India and Central Asia in "The Record of the Western Regions", the most comprehensive account of its kind ever written in the Orient. One of his records concerning Buddhism in Nepal says:

> There are about 2000 priests, who study both the great (Mahayana) and little (Hinayana=Theravāda) vehicles (Sects). This was the time when the King Amsuvarma the great ascended the thrown of Nepal. The kings of Nepal were eminent scholars who believed in Buddhism. A recent King who's Name is "Ang-Shu-Fa-ma" (Amsuvarma) had composed a treatise on Etymology.[50]

The above passage indicates that around 1207 BE, at the time of King Amshuvarma[51] Buddhism had profoundly influenced Nepalese society. There existed both the Mahayana and Theravāda traditions and a number of *bhikkhus* and *bhikkhunis* were practicing in the Buddhist tradition. King Amshuvarma himself had built six Buddhist temples.[52] However, it is not clear that these temples were residences of Theravāda monks. This question is controversial and requires further research. There is some information that indicates the significance of Theravāda monasteries, such as the inscription of Hadigoun of King Amshuvarma,

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[48] Kanali Lal Hazra, **The Rise and Decline of Buddhism in India**, (Delhi: Motilal Publications), p. 371.

[49] **The Soka Gakkai Dictionary of Buddhism**, http://www.sgi-usa.org/Buddhism/library/sgdb/lexicon; Usa Lohacharoon, **The Study of Life and Buddhist Literature of Xuan Zang**, (Bangkok: MA Thesis: Mahachulalongkorn University, 2546 BE), pp. 32-77.

[50] Samuel Beal, 1994, op. cit., p. 80-81; Bhuwan Lal Pradhan, 1988, op. cit., pp. 102-103; Sathian Phothinantha, 2543 BE, op. cit., pp. 57-58.

[51] Naresh Man Bajracharya, **Buddhism in Nepal (465 B.C. to 1199 A.D)**, (Delhi: Eastern Book Linkers, 1998), pp. 26-28

[52] Bhuwan Lal Pradhan, 1988, op. cit., footnote 2, p. 97.

which says, "With all kinds of facilities (King) builds the monastery for four direction of the sangha such as Sri Sivadeva Vihāra etc."[53]

It can be said that these temples belonged to Theravāda monks because the monks in Theravāda schools build their monasteries with the saying, "for the four directions of the Sangha." So, historians speculate that the King may have favoured Theravāda Buddhism or he supported both traditions without discrimination. Moreover, it is necessary to ascertain what "the little vehicle" meant to Venerable Hiuen Tsiang, because according to his travel records he did not travel to Kathmandu Valley himself. He recorded these facts on his visit to Lumbini.

Whether these temples were Theravāda or not, it can be said that Buddhism was widely practiced in Nepalese society and it is believed that one of the sects that was widely practiced was the Theravāda. Unfortunately, Nepal lost her original Buddhist identity around thirteenth century. Nevertheless, Buddhism has been the principle religion in different periods of the history of Nepal. Buddhism lost its purity durnig the reign of King Jayasthiti Malla, who imposed Hindu law on Nepal. Monks were forced to abandon their vows and to become householders.[54] They could hardly practice the Buddha's teachings in their purity, and so they preserved parts of Buddhist doctrine by combining it with Hinduism. That combination gave birth to Newār Buddhism, which has continued to be practiced in different ways into the modern period.

Based on the available literature and evidence, we can say that the Theravāda tradition was present in Nepalese Society from the time of the Buddha. Over time, practices changed and evolved as a result of social, economic, and cultural interactions between Nepal and India in the early centuries of the Christian era. Buddhism never wholly disappeared from Nepal and Buddhist scholars say that Nepal is the only country in which Buddhism has been practiced continuously from the time of the Buddha to the present day.[55]

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[53] Ibid., p. 97.

[54] Nancy Grant, 1987, op. cit.; N. B. Thapa, op. cit., p. 30-33.

[55] Sathian Phothinantha, op. cit., p. 1; Harishchandra Lal, 1999, op. cit., p. 16.

2.3. Theravāda Buddhism in the post-*Rānā* years

According to the recorded history of Nepal, after the social reforms carried out by King Jayasthiti Malla (1382-95 CE), Buddhism went into decline and developed into Newār Buddhism. Newār Buddhism has persisted to the present day. Venerable Mahapragya, a Hindu by birth, became, in 1924, the first Nepalese to be ordained as a Buddhist monk in 600 years. That ordination was the bud from which the light of Buddhism would blossom in modern Nepal. Later, many Nepalese ordained and activated the Theravāda revival movement in Nepal. Theravāda Buddhism had once again entered the history of Nepal through the efforts of the Nepalese themselves.

In the closing years of the 19th century many Buddhist countries introduced what has been called "Buddhist modernism", that is a reformation and propagation of Buddhist ideas.[56] This movement brought Buddhism back to India and Sri Lanka as well. *Anāgārika Dharmapāla* of Sri Lanka established the Mahābodhi Society in India and led the conversion of a large number of Indians to Buddhism. This society became one of the world's best-known and most active Buddhist organizations, introducing Buddhism throughout the world.

The *Rānā* regime in Nepal strictly prohibited any attempts to introduce Buddhist reform movements into Nepal. The *Rānā* regime was isolationist, and its tenure was a dark age in the history of Nepal and Buddhism. However, the reform movement of the Mahābodhi Society in India and its success was impressive to the Nepalese who learned of it at the beginning of the 20th century. *Anāgārika Dharmapāla* was instrumental in reviving Buddhism in India. Encouraged by this, the Nepalese Jagat Man Vaidya (*Dharmāditya Dharmācārya*) converted to Buddhism under the guidance of *Anāgārika Dharmapāla* the founder of the Mahābodhi Society. Though at the time there were strict controls on education in Nepal, but because Vaidya's father was a palace physician he was permitted to study in India. With the help of the Mahābodhi Society, Jagat Man Vaidya initiated a similar movement for Nepal, becoming the first person to take the initial steps of Theravāda Buddhist revivalism in modern Nepal. In doing so, he followed in the footsteps of

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[56] Heinz Bechert & Hartmann Jens-Uwe, "Observation on the Reform of Buddhism in Nepal", **Journal of Nepal Research Centre**, vol. VIII, (Kathmandu: Kantipur Printing Press, 1988), p. 6.

Anāgārika Dharmapāla in India. During Vaidya's frequent visits to Nepal he established several Buddhist organizations in order to promote the revival of Theravāda Buddhism in Nepal. He worked tirelessly to revive Buddhism in Nepal while being watchful of the *Rānā* rulers and their possible wrath. Nepal had long forgotten *Buddha Jayanti* or Vesak Day (*Baisakh Purnima*) and there was no observance of it in the Kathmandu Valley or in Lumbini. Jagat Man Vaidya re-initiated observances and, for example, ended animal slaughter at Mayadevi Temple, Lumbini.

During the Prime Ministership of Chandra Samsher Jung Bahādur *Rānā*, the law in Nepal strictly prohibited conversion or proselytisation. Venerable Mahapragya received ordination from the famous Tibetan Lama, Venerable Tsering Norbu, and attempted to restore Swayambhu Stupa in Kathmandu but was expelled from the country along with four other Buddhist lama-monks in 1925. They met then with members of the Mahābodhi Society and wrote to the Government of Nepal requesting reasons for the expulsion of Buddhist monks from Nepal. In reply the *Rānā* isolationist regime said that that was the new rule concerning Buddhist conversion.[57] The four Tibet monks went to Buddhagaya, the place of the Buddha's enlightenment, and met with a Myanmar monk. They were impressed with him and took *sāmanera* ordination in the Theravāda tradition with Venerable U. Kosala.[58] However, Venerable Mahapragya was still not allowed to re-enter Nepal. This was the turning point for the revival of the Theravāda tradition in Nepal. Venerable Mahapragya was the first Nepalese Theravāda novice in modern times. However, he disrobed and went again to Tibet to further his studies. On his return to India in 1928, he met with the Most Venerable U Chandramani Mahasthavir a Myanmar monk at Kusinagara. Impressed with his explanations of Buddhism, Venerable Mahapragya and re-ordained as a Theravāda *sāmanera*.

These events, in the course of time, gave rise to the ordinations of Theravāda monks and nuns in Nepal. The first Theravāda novice appeared in the streets of Kathmandu in 1930s. He was Venerable Bhikkhu *Pragyānanda* (Karmasheel). He entered Nepal as a Theravādin

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[57] Darasha Newami (ed.), **Sahitya Suta Karmasthanacarya va Bauddharsi Mahaprajhaya atmakatha. An Autobiography of Mahapragya**, (Kathmandu: Sakalopasaka Publications, 1983), vol. 1, pp. 41-43.

[58] Phra Vipassi, 2001, op. cit., p. 96; Venerable Mahapragya did not identify himself as U. Kosala in his autobiography, (Darasha Newami, 1983, op. cit., p. 43).

and propagated Buddhism. The *Rānā* rulers were aware of him and kept a close eye on his religious activities at Kindol Vihāra. Later, many devotees were arrested and fined. In 1931 (1988 BS) *Karunaratan*, *Jogbir Si*, *Manikman*, *Mandas*, and *Siddhiratna* were arrested as a result of a gathering at the monastery, and made to stand before Prime Minister Bhim Samser *Rānā*. They were severely punished and sent into exile. The following day, *Khadgaraj*, *Dasaratna*, *Harshadasa*, and *Prabhuti* were arrested in the same manner and imprisoned for the same offence.[59] These days happened to be public holidays (*Sonti, Tihar*), which ended six days later, and the men were imprisoned for the duration of the holiday period. They were forced to sign declarations that they would not propagate Buddhism again and were released. *Dasaratna* was fined Rs. 10 for printing Buddhist pamphlets. The others who had been released were recalled and made to sign documents.[60] Fortunately, Venerable *Karmasheel*, who used to give discourses, was not there. He had gone into meditation at another location. Upon returning, he proceeded to Kusinagara with his four followers who later took ordination. This incident prompted *Dasaratna*, or *Baram Shahu*, who was running Buddhist activities in Kindol Vihāra and a supporter of Venerable *Karmasheel*, to ordain as a *sāmanera* in the Theravāda tradition; he ordained in Kusinagara in 1933, under the guidance of Venerable U. *Chandramani*, after visiting Myanmar and staying there for three months.[61] He learnt Buddhism with his teacher and visited many places in Myanmar for the second time. He returned to Nepal after one year but because he was a yellow-robed monk, he was made to suffer by *Rānā* Government officials from the time that he arrived at *Amlekgung*. However, with the help of fellow passengers and the driver, he made it to Kathmandu Valley after two days. The police questioned him within an hour of his arrival, and the following day arrested him immediately he arrived in the city of Kathmandu. He was interrogated by Major *Chandra Bahādur*, who was not so courteous, and told that he could not be a monk in Nepal. After being kept in prison for six days he was sent to the Maharaja, Prime Minister Juddha Samser *Rānā* at the palace. Prime Minister Juddha Samser *Rānā*, who had just assumed duties as high officer, asked if Buddhism was harmful to the Kingdom. In reply, the

[59] According to Venerable *Dhammāloka* they were arrested the same day but their cases were heard on different days (Ven. *Dhammāloka*, **A Pilgrimage In China**, (Kathmandu: pub. by Bhikkhu Aniruddha Mahāsthavir, 1999), p. 13-14).

[60] Venerable *Dhammāloka*, 1999, op. cit., p. 13ff; B.P. Lacoul, **Nepalay Sthaviravada Gukathan Wagu Kha**, (Kathmandu: Hisi Press, (BS 2042)1985), p. 74-75.

[61] Venerable *Dhammāloka*, 1999, op. cit., p. 16-17; Ratna Sunder Sakya, **Bhikshu *Dhammāloka* Mahāsthavir**, 1992, p. 9.

sāmanera explained the five precepts. He maintained that Buddhism does not bring harm to any Kingdom, but that it only teaches people to be moral. The Maharaja was impressed and asked the other officers, how a man's becoming a monk harmed the Kingdom. The Maharaja ruled that ordination was to be permitted and Venerable *Dhammāloka* was released.[62] From that day forward, he preached Dhamma freely for some years and collected alms in conformity to the Theravāda tradition. He founded modern Nepal's first Theravāda temple, Ananda Kuti Vihāra, at the foot of Swayambhu Hill.[63] The following year, he travelled to Sāranāth for a newly established *sima* celebration. While there he took the higher ordination with his Venerable Teacher. It was 1934.

In 1936, Venerable *Amritānanda* was ordained in Theravāda tradition at Kusinagara after seeing the Buddhist monk, Venerable U Chandramani. Venerable *Amritānanda* went to Bhojpur in Eastern Nepal immediately after ordination where he met with Venerable Mahapragya. They propagated the Dhamma there, and because Venerable Mahapragya had been exiled before, the officers remembered him. So, the two were quickly arrested and jailed for their religious activities. Eventually they were expelled from the country.[64]

After completing his studies in Sri Lanka, towards the end of 1942, Venerable *Amritānanda* returned to Nepal, and gave Buddhist discourses at Swayambhu Hill for one month during the *Gûňlā* days.[65] The people responded positively to his teachings and the number of listeners increased day-by-day. Other monks and nuns, who had studied abroad, returned to Nepal and joined in propagating the Dhamma at different places in Kathmandu Valley. This was a great breakthrough in the time of the *Rānā* regime, which had prohibited public assemblies of more than four persons in an effort to suppress political unrest then brewing in Nepal. The activities of the Theravāda revival were having effects on socio-religious attitudes, freethinking, and education, and the *Rānā* rulers consequently paid close attention to the revival movement.

[62] Venerable *Dhammāloka*, 1999, op. cit., p. 28; B.P. Lacoul, 1985, op. cit., p. 77; Ratnasunder Sakya, op. cit., 1992, pp. 11-12.

[63] A place, where he got happiness and used to come and stay for peace of mind because Kindol Vihāra had many nuns and was crowded.

[64] Kuladharma Ratna Tuladhar, **Buddhism in Nepal**, (Kathmandu: Dharmodaya Sabhā, 1986), p. 15; Heinz Bechert, 1988, op. cit., p. 11-12.

[65] This celebrates one month of the three-month *vassavasa* or rains retreat (B.P. Lacoul, 1985, op. cit., p. 81-83).

The rulers attempted to suppress the movement, and to eliminate teaching and propagation. But the Buddhists were determined and none of them gave up the propagation and promotion of Buddhism. The situation led to confrontations between the Theravāda monks and the *Rānā* regime. In 1944, after a visit by the most Venerable U Chandramani to Nepal, all of the Theravāda monks and nuns were arrested during *Vassavasa* on 30th July 1944. Under Maharaja Prime Minister Juddha Samsher, they were served with orders to cease forthwith:

(1) giving sermons,

(2) performing and observing Buddhist ceremonies, and

(3) The ordination of anyone into the Sangha.

Moreover, all monks and nuns were ordered to disrobe and return to lay life within three days. They refused to comply and were forced to leave the country. However, nuns were allowed to remain in the *vihāra* for the remainder of the rainy season. Later, they went to Trisuli. The monks, who were exiled from Nepal included:[66]

1. Venerable *Pragyānanda*
2. Venerable Dhammāloka
3. Venerable Subodhananda
4. Venerable Pragnarashmi
5. *Sāmanera* Pragnarasa
6. *Sāmanera* Ratna Jyoti
7. *Sāmanera* Aggadhamma
8. *Sāmanera* Kumar

The *bhikkhus* went to Buddhist places in various parts of India and other countries. In the following year Gyanmala Bhajan Khala[67] was arrested and prosecuted for singing Buddhist songs. The Buddhist world was shocked and grieved by the expulsion of the Nepalese monks. There were several meetings held in different countries and many Buddhist organizations and great Buddhist leaders wrote to protest the actions of

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[66] B.P. Lacoul, 1985, op. cit., p. 83-86; R. B. Vandya, **Sanghanayaka Venerable Pragyananda**, op. cit., p. 32ff; Phra Vipassi, 2001, op. cit., p. 100-101.

[67] For more detail see Venerable Sughandha, **Role of Gyanmala Liturgy in Nepalese Theravāda community**, XIV Conference of the Internatinal Association of Buddhist studies, Dept. Of the Study of Religions, London, 2005.

the Nepalese Government.[68] *Dharmāditya Dharmācārya* (Jagat Man Vaidya) formed the Nepalese Buddhist Organization in order to assist the exiled monks. At the same time, the exiled Nepalese monks founded a new organization, the Dharmodaya Sabhā[69] with the help of other Buddhist monks at Sarnath on 30th November 1944, with Venerable U Chandramani Mahāsthavir as Chairman and Bhadant Ananda Kausalyan as Vice-president. Venerable *Amritānanda* was General Secretary of the organization. After Dharmodaya Sabhā had been formed, Venerable *Amritānanda* visited many other Buddhist organizations in order to protest the actions of the Nepalese Government. Eventually he went to Sri Lanka.

In 1946 after two years in exile, Venerable *Amritānanda* succeeded in bringing about a goodwill mission to Nepal from Sri Lanka under leadership of Venerable Nārada Mahathera, one of the best-known and well-respected Buddhist monks at that time. The delegates of the mission were able to meet with Prime Minister Padma Samsher JBR and at the request of Venerable *Amritānanda* the Maharaja permitted the return of the exiled monks to Nepal.[70] Since that day, Theravāda Buddhism has developed smoothly and is now flourishing in Nepal. Venerable Nārada Mahathera returned to Nepal many times. He brought with him relics of the Buddha and a shoot of the Bodhi tree from Sri Lanka. He built a Sri Lankan style stupa at Ananda Kuti Vihāra and performed many other activities in support of Buddhism in Nepal. On his third visit to Nepal he met again with Prime Minister Mohan Samsher and upon the request of Venerable Nārada Mahathera, the Prime Minister declared *Baisakha Purnimā* (Vesak Day) a public holiday.[71]

2.4. The Mahābodhi Society and Theravāda Revival Movement

Prince Siddhartha of Kapilavattu founded Buddhism in Ancient India nearly 2,600 years ago. The remains of Buddhist monasteries, stupas, and other historical Buddhist sites are visible evidence signifying that Buddhism was widely and avidly practiced throughout ancient India. However, Buddhism went into decline and completely disappeared from India after the Muslim invasion of India in about the eleventh century.

[68] Kuladharma Ratna Tuladhar, 1986, op. cit., p. 16.

[69] N.B. Bajracharya, **Amritanjali A homage to the Late Venerable Bhikkhu *Amritānanda***, (Kathmandu: Ananda Kuti Vihāra trust, 1992), pp. 94-111.

[70] Bhikkhu *Amritānanda*, 1986, op. cit., p. 8-9.

[71] Ibid., p. 10.

Rising and falling is the main doctrine of Buddhism and the doctrine applies to Buddhism itself. Growth and decline, birth and death follow quickly upon each other. After having disappeared from India, Buddhism was again given a spark of light by Sir Alexander Cunningham. He discovered ancient places of Buddhism and promoted them all over the world. Following that decade of discovery, Sir David Arnold wrote **The Light of Asia**, which became one of the most famous books in the English language. **The Light of Asia** inspired Don David Hewawitarana, a young Sri Lankan man, later known as *Anāgārika Dharmapāla* (1864-1933), to become a devoted Buddhist. It was he who established the Mahābodhi Society in India in order to propagate Buddhism and to recover Buddhist sites. The Society was the first Buddhist organization in the modern world to send Buddhist missionaries abroad and to foster interaction with the various Buddhist countries of the world. The Mahābodhi Society has played an important role in the revival of Buddhism in India including in restoring the Buddhagaya Temple to Buddhism from Hinduism.

The success of the Mahābodhi Society in India[72] was one of the key factors in the resurgence of Buddhism in other South Asian countries such as Sri Lanka and Nepal. The zeal and success of the Society impressed the Nepalese Buddhists, who came into contact with it. At the beginning, these were mostly Nepalese merchants, students and pilgrims. Merchants were the first to hear the Dhamma from missionaries of the Society and to provide support along the trade routes of Asia. Most of those who came into contact with the Mahābodhi Society were Newār Buddhists. They played a crucial and indispensable role in the early years of the Buddhist revival. When they came into contact with the Society they realized that there were still Buddhist monks in the world and they were encouraged to attempt to revive Theravāda Buddhism in the country of its origin, Nepal. Throughout the history of Theravāda Buddhism in modern Nepal, contacts with the Mahābodhi Society have remained strong, and those contacts were a main base for the revival of Buddhism in Nepal.

Nepalese students were yet another avenue through which constructive idea came to Nepal. Prof. V. V. Gokhale has written that, "Students of Buddhism have given the Theravāda Buddhist movement a

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[72] Kloppenborg, 1977, op. cit. p. 302.

kick start in Nepal."[73] There were two educational centres in Nepal, Darbar School (Palace School) and Tricandra College. Both were established in 1918. All the instructors were from India or were British. Reportedly, the only students were members of Government families. As there were no institutions of higher education in Kathmandu, they were sent to India to further their education. By the end of the nineteenth century, an increasing number of students were going to India to study. There they were exposed to the incendiary ideas of the free India movement. Moreover, they were exposed to the equally radical ideas, from a Buddhist perspective, of the Mahābodhi Society.

2.5. *Dharmāditya Dharmācārya* and his work

One of the important figures in this great work was Mr. Jagat Man, later known as *Dharmāditya Dharmācārya*, who went to Calcutta, India for advanced studies in 1921. He was a young Newār Buddhist from Chika Bahi in Lalitpur. He embraced the new Buddhism in India. He had the opportunity to study abroad in India because his father was the Ayurvedic Physician to Prime Minister Juddha Samsher *Rānā*. He went to Calcutta for his matriculation in 1921. That was at the same time that the Dharmarajika Buddhist Vihāra was inaugurated and made head office of the Mahābodhi Society. The **Mahābodhi** magazine was being published and Theravāda Buddhism was being propagated through that magazine. While *Dharmāditya Dharmācārya* was in India, he came into personal contact with *Anāgārika Dharmapāla* and studied Buddhism under him. He also studied on his own at that temple. According to B. P. Lacoul, meeting *Anāgārika Dharmapāla* was like meeting the Buddha himself.[74] *Dharmāditya Dharmācārya* was impressed with the Theravāda view and way of life. He changed his clothes to yellow and became a member of the Mahābodhi Society. He changed his name to *Dharmāditya Dharmācārya* and dedicated himself to learning Buddhism and *Pāli*. He initiated activities for the reinstatement of Buddhism in Nepal. This was the starting point of the modern revival of Theravāda Buddhism in Nepal.[75] His work initiated the movement and he established a Buddhist organization for the revival of Theravāda Buddhism, Buddhadharma

[73] P. V. Bapat (ed.), **2500 Years of Buddhism**, (New Delhi: Motilal Publications, 1959), p. 84.

[74] Lacoul, 1985, op. cit., p. 45-46.

[75] Bhikkhu *Sudarshan* Mahāsthavir, "Role of Theravāda in the Preservation of Newār Buddhism", www.licnepal.org/papers/cbnm-p.

Uddar Sangha Nepal, or Organization for the Revival of Buddhism in Nepal. The objectives of this Buddhist organization were to:[76]

1. Return Buddhist sites in Nepal to Buddhists, these should not be under the control of other religions;

2. Provide Buddhist books which were not available in Nepal;

3. Bring important Buddhist books to Nepal and translate them into the Newāri language;

4. Provide residences for *bhikkhus, bhikkhunis, upasakas*, and *upasikas*;

5. Promote Buddhism from place to place;

6. Teach pure Buddhist views and give references for those doctrines.

7. Renovate and maintain Buddhist monasteries, stupas, temples and so forth;

8. Invite *bhikkhus* and *bhikkhunis* of other countries to make pilgrimages to Nepal, and help them with their needs;

9. Help Buddhist pilgrims of Nepal to other places;

10. Maintain Lumbini Park and help those who visit it with their every need;

11. Welcome all new members to the Organisation and make regulations;

12. Investigate and correct misinterpretations of Buddhism.

The objectives were modelled on those of the Mahābodhi Society. After the organization was founded in Calcutta, *Dharmāditya*

[76] B.P. Lacoul, 1985, op. cit., pp. 47-48.

Dharmācārya's principal strategies for the revival of Buddhism was published in Buddhist journals in Hindi, Bengali, Nepali, Newāri and English. Phra Vipassi Dhammaramo writes in his thesis:

> Along with introductions on Nepalese Buddhism popular sections of the *Pāli* canons also were published. These included translations of the Dhammacakkappavatana sutta, Jivakasutta and Sigalovada sutta.[77]

It is speculated that *Dharmāditya Dharmācārya* was the first Nepalese to introduce the *Pāli* language into modern Nepal, through magazines which were published by the Mahābodhi Society. He not only edited the articles but also wrote Buddhist articles, essays, translations etc. In 1926, he returned to Kathmandu on the occasion of the full moon in the month of *Baisakha* or the first month of the Nepalese calendar. This month is one of the most important months to Buddhism, known as *Vesak* or *Baisakh*. He organized a celebration of Vesak Day, or *Buddha Jayanti* or *Swaya Punhi*, as it is now called in Nepal. That was the first celebration after many centuries and the first step in the introduction of authentic Buddhist doctrine and practice to modern Nepal. The celebration has now become a tradition observed throughout the country. In order to celebrate this historic event, he founded the Nepal Buddhopasaka Sangha, The Nepalese Laymen's Buddhist Organization, at a meeting in Dhamam Sahu's *puja* room, in Kathmandu Valley on a short visit to Nepal.[78] The members of the new organization were:

President and Manager	*Dharmāditya Dharmācārya*
Assistant	Upasaka Kuldipa
Organizer	Upasaka Khadgaraj
Treasurer	Upasaka Triratnaman
Advertisement/Public Relations	Upasaka Citradhar

All the rules and regulations of the organization were in conformity with Buddhist concepts and with abstinence from immoral actions. The doctrines that they adopted were mostly based on the Buddhist precepts (*pancasila*, *asthasila*, *dasasila*, etc) and the *Sigalovada*

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[77] Phra Vipassi, 2001, op. cit., p. 97.

[78] Lacoul, 1985, op. cit., p. 48; B. P. Lacoul, **Dharmacharyaya Buddha-dharma wa Nepal bhāsā muna**, p. 28, 3rd vol. 3, 2469 BE, p. 36ff.

Sutta. That is to say, the rules and regulations of the new organisation were modelled on Buddhist doctrines for being a good person in society. *Dharmāditya Dharmācārya* himself translated each and every *Pāli* word for the rules. This indicates his intention to promote genuine Buddhism through acting a genuine Buddhist. To this day the Theravāda of Nepal continues to focus more on the importance of the precepts in daily life than on other Buddhist doctrines.

Dharmāditya Dharmācārya also founded the Nepal Buddhopasika Sangha, or the Nepalese Laywomen's Buddhist Organization, at Ihlan Nani Baha, Lalitpur, in accordance with the intentions of the female members.[79] The management committee was:

Management	*Dharmāditya Dharmācārya*
Organizer/President	Upasika Hiramaya
Assistant/Treasurer	Upasika Dhanamaya

The rules and regulations were the same as for the men's organization. Members of these organizations were advised to practice according to Buddhist right way of life, *samma ajiva* (right livelihood). The rules were strictly observed in these organizations. All committee members were expected to be honest and upright members of Nepalese society. There is at least one example of a layman who wanted to become a member of the organization but was refused because of his immoral behaviour.[80]

The main propose of these organizations was not merely to celebrate Vesak Day, but more fundamentally to revive Theravāda Buddhism through the celebration and through other religious activities. Vesak Day is one of the most important days on the Theravāda calendar, celebrating the birth, enlightenment, and *Parinibbana* of the Buddha. *Dharmāditya Dharmācārya* distributed the Buddha images and books on the life of the Buddha Vesak Day, hoping that the celebration would raise the awareness of Theravāda Buddhism among the Nepalese. Because of the significance of the day, he emphasized its importance in his first publication, the **Buddhadharma** Journal. In the journal and in his published schedule for Vesak Day, he also used Buddhist Era (BE) instead of the Nepalese Nepal Sambat (NS) or Bikram Sambat (BS). That

[79] B.P. Lacoul, 1985, op. cit. p. 49; B.P. Lacoul, vol. 3, 2469 BE, op. cit., pp. 44-45.
[80] B.P. Lacoul, 2469 BE, op. cit., p. 39.

schedule starts with reciting the five precepts in the morning and continues with such activities as chanting recollections of the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha and a procession bearing a Buddha image around the city. **Buddhadharma**, emphasizing genuine Buddha-Dhamma, was the first Newāri language journal to be published in Nepal. Because of its use of the ethnic language, Newāri, or Nepal Bhāsā, which is spoken primarily in the Government dominated Kathmandu Valley, the journal became a means of promoting the language and culture. Later issues were published under the name **Buddhadharma wa Nepal Bhāsā**. About ten issues were published, concentrating on Theravāda Buddhist concepts.[81] The first issue of **Buddhadharma** contained the following items:[82]

1. An editorial written in Nepal Bhāsā, in which *Dharmāditya Dharmācārya* bewailed the fact that no one in Nepal now knew what is and is not Buddhism, and declaring his intention of translating all the Buddhist texts and publishing them in the journal, which he would publish once a month.

2. The *Dhammacakkappavatana Sutta* outlining the Four Noble Truths and the Noble Eightfold path to full enlightenment.

3. A Nepal Bhāsā translation of the Sutta.

4. An article written in Nepal Bhāsā entitled "Praise of *Baisakha Purnima*";

5. Aims of the Buddha Dharma Uddhar Sangha Nepal.

In this way, *Dharmāditya Dharmācārya* planted the seeds of Theravāda Buddhism in modern Nepal. The Vesak Day celebration of 1926 (2470 BE) was the first Theravāda Buddhist propagation activity in modern Nepalese society. A vast number of Nepalese joined the celebrations throughout the country. In 1928 *Dharmāditya Dharmācārya* wrote, "The full-moon Day of *Baisakha*, better known in Nepal as *Swanya Punhi* falls in May, Buddhists in large numbers celebrated for the third time…"[83] This issue was published in June of 1928 (2472 BE) by

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[81] B.P. Lacoul, 1985, op. cit., pp. 51-52.

[82] David N. Gellner, "Theravāda Revivalism in Nepal: Some Reflections on the Interpretation of the Early Years," (UK: Brunel University, n.d.), pp. 5-6.

[83] **Buddhist India**, vol II. no. 2, June 1928, (Mahā Bodhi Society), p. 132.

the Mahābodhi Society. That he wrote that Nepalese celebrated the "third time" suggests that the first celebration of Vesak Day in modern Nepal would have been in (2470 BE) 1926. That was the bud that would blossom with light for the propagation of Theravāda Buddhism. *Dharmāditya Dharmācārya* used to say that Nepal is the birthplace of the Buddha and that millions of Buddhists are living there but that Vesak Day had been forgotten. Therefore, he emphasized the importance of Vesak Day and the precepts for the laity.

Dharmāditya Dharmācārya was the pioneer who initiated the celebration of the *Buddha Jayanti* Festival and who published the **Buddhadharma** journal, first from Calcutta, for the Buddhist campaign. He was responsible for eradicating the sacrifice of animals at Mayadevi Temple in Lumbini. Thus he did much pioneering work and took the leading role in establishing Nepalese Buddhist organisations. These were the initial activities in the revival of Theravāda Buddhism in modern Nepal. Most of these activities were held in Kindol Vihāra in Kathmandu, which was renovated by *Dharmāditya Dharmācārya* himself.[84] Vesak Day is now celebrated widely to the extent that the celebration has become a Nepalese custom. It is now, indeed, a national holiday celebrated throughout the country.

One of the very important activities of *Dharmāditya Dharmācārya* was to organize the All India Buddhist Conference in Calcutta in 1926. It was the first Buddhist conference in modern India. This conference was held at the Dharmarajika Temple and lasted three days, from 27 to 29 December, with participants from 24 different Buddhist organizations attending from both Nepal and India. It focused on the preservation of Buddhist sites in India. The Akhil Bharata Baudha Congress was founded, and the status of Buddhism in Nepal was discussed.[85] After the conference, they established an active committee to carry out the work discussed at the Conference. Even though he himself never ordained as a monk, *Dharmāditya Dharmācārya* campaigned for the re-establishment of the monastic order. He initiated the renovation of Kindol Vihāra[86] as the centre of the Theravāda revival movement. Later,

[84] Lacoul, **Nepalaya Sthaviravada**, op. cit., p. 61.

[85] Ibid., p. 58-9.

[86] As part of his efforts to reform Buddhism in Nepal he paid homage at Swayambhu. Finding it in dilapidated condition, he published his concerns on the front page of the Buddhadharma magazine and inspired the devotees to reconstruct it.

this *vihāra* became the main meeting point for the movement and for the development of the Theravāda tradition in modern Nepal.

Dharmāditya Dharmācārya dedicated his life to the revival of Buddhism in Nepal. However, as a result of his religious and cultural activities, his scholarship was terminated and in 1930 he was forced to return to Nepal and to serve as a Government official. He could neither continue to provide his services to Buddhism nor give his time for religion and literature. Nevertheless, he continued to be centrally involved in the propagation of the Theravāda message in Nepal. Although his work and dedication was not successful in acquiring sufficient assistance from the public, due to the Government's strict policy against conversion, his efforts were a key point in the revival and development of Theravāda Buddhism Nepal.[87]

2.6. Buddhists in Early Modern Nepal

Newār society has been deeply involved in Buddhism from early on and the form of Buddhism that they have traditionally practiced and is known as Newār Buddhism. What is currently known as Newār Buddhism was well established by the fifteenth century, following the elimination of permanently celibate monks by either Sankaracharya a Hindu priest or King Jayasthiti Malla.[88] Newār society consists of over30 castes. Some of these, such as Maharjan, Jyapu, Shrestha, are large and found throughout the region. Others are small and specialized, found in small numbers wherever they can support themselves. There is one Buddhist priestly caste made up of two ranked sections: the Vajracharyas and the Sakyas. They are the members of Newār Buddhist monasteries called *baha* or *bahi*. In so far as they perform their roles in the monastery, they are monks. In effect, they are married, part-time monks. John K. Locke points out,[89] "This is clear statement of three facts: the members of the Sangha are married and have sons, membership in the Sangha is limited to sons of members, and pure caste status is a prerequisite for initiation."

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[87] Phra Vipassi, 2001, op. cit., p. 97-8.

[88] David N. Gellner, **Monk, Householder, and Tantric Priest**, (Cambridge University Press, 1992), p. 21-23.

[89] Ibid.

Therefore, the Most Venerable *Amritānanda*, who was born into the Newār Priestly caste writes, "I was taught that there were Buddhist monks only in wall paintings, there was no living Buddhist monks left on earth."[90] He had believed that the lineage of celibate monks had ended 600 years before, in the time of King Jayasthiti Malla, although Buddhist priests are known by such terms as "*bhikshu*" or "*sakya bhikshu*" (*gubaju*, *guruba* in Newāri). At the beginning of the Theravāda Buddhist revival the Newār priests played an important role the efforts to revive and develop Theravāda Buddhism in Nepal. Even *Dharmāditya Dharmācārya*, who initiated the revival and dedicated himself to it, as well as some of the senior monks, such as Venerable *Pragyānanda*, Venerable *Dhammāloka*, Venerable *Amritānanda*, Venerable *Sudarshan*, came from this tradition. David Gellner, a scholar of Newār Buddhism writes:

> Newār cultural nationalism focuses on Buddhism. Many Buddhist intellectuals are more interested either in reviving traditional Newār Buddhism or in propagating the relatively newly introduced Theravāda Buddhism.[91]

It was probably at the time of King Jayasthiti Malla, or shortly thereafter, that the last of the celibate monks died out along with the texts that they had maintained. Thereafter, Newārs who wished to ordain had to do so through the Tibetan Tradition.

In early years of the twentieth century, Pandit Nisthananda translated the *Lalitvistara*, a biography of the Buddha. This was the first time that a Sanskrit Mahayana text had been translated into Nepal Bhāsā. Completed in 1914, the translation had a major influence on Newār cultural nationalists and influenced many of the early figures in the revival of Theravāda Buddhism. There were some Newārs who were interested in ordaining as Buddhist monks in Tibetan Buddhism and the Nyingmapa tradition of Tibet played an important role in the revival of Buddhism in Nepal. One of the leading figures was Kunsam Lhosel or Kyangtse Lama.[92] Nepalese began to ordain as monks under his guidance, learning Tibetan culture.

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[90] Bhikkhu *Amritānanda*, op. cit., p. 1.

[91] David N. Gellner, 1992, op. cit., p. 14.

[92] Phra Vipassi, 2001, op. cit., p. 94-95; Different sources give different dates for Kyangtse Lama's arrival in Kathmandu, varying from 1922-1925.

Later on, early in 1926 Venerable Mahapragya took ordination and later Venerable *Pragyānanda* and others, under the guidance of Venerable Chandramani Mahathera of Myanmar, who was at Kusinagara. According to Venerable *Dhammāloka*'s records there were no Theravāda monks in Nepal, and it was hard to find the *civara* or robes. He therefore brought *asthapariskar* (monk's robe and bowl etc.) from Sri Lanka, as symbols of the Theravāda monk. These were rare items in Nepal and became objects of worship representing Theravāda monks at Kindol Vihāra at beginning of 1930s.[93] An actual monk took residence at Kindol Vihāra with Venerable Karmasheel's arrival in the same year, after taking the Theravāda *sāmanera* ordination with Venerable U Chandramani in Kusinagara, India.

2.6.1. Nepalese Ordination in Theravāda

In the early 1920s, *Dharmāditya* Dharmācārya began his campaign for the revival of Theravāda Buddhism, teaching that Nepal was the land of the Buddha's birth. Meanwhile, the Baisākha purnimā celebration and publicing of "Buddha Dhamma" magazine by *Dharmāditya Dharmācārya* had been inflaming the inner quest for spirituality in Nepalewse society. Furthermore, simulteniously, Tibeten Buddhism had been inspiring Newari Society to walk the path that was once nearly lost. One of the well-known monks who came from Tibet and preached the Dhamma to the Nepalese was Kyangtse Lama. Known in Nepal as Kyanchhe Lama,[94] he had come on pilgrimage to Nepal. His sermons and the publication of the *Lalitavistara* inspired many to seek Buddhist ordination in the early period of the modern history of Buddhism in Nepal. It was the fortunate conjunction of Nisthananda's translation of the *Lalitavistara* into the mother tongue, producing a Newāri version of the Buddha's life story, *Dharmāditya Dharmācārya* revivalism, and the visits of Kyangtse Lama, which ensured that "the Bud of the Dharma"[95] planted by the Venerable Lama, should flower so quickly and produce such impressive fruit.

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[93] He visited his son Gajaratna (Venerable Aniruddha) in Sri Lanka after Gajaratna ordained as a Theravāda *sāmanera* at Vidyalankar parivena Sri Lanka; see Venerable *Dhammāloka*, **A pilgrimage in China**, pp. 12-13, and Ratna Sundar Sakya, **Sanghanayaka Bhikshu Aniruddha Mahāsthavir,** (Kathmandu: New Nepal Press, 1998) p. 4.

[94] Records of his teachings and recollections of his journey have been published separately as: Satyamohan Josi (ed.), **Rgyan'tshal Bla-ma wa Ngon-dro Lumanti Muna**, (Laltipur: Bodhi Prakasan Kendra, 1990).

[95] David Gellner, "**Theravāda Revivalism**", op. cit., p. 10.

Venerable Kyangtse Lama[96] came from Tibet to visit the Swayambhu Stupa in Kathmandu and arrived first at Namobuddha (*Namura*) to the east of the Kathmandu Valley. Newār Buddhists met him and were impressed by his feat of prostrating all the way from Tibet. They invited him to stay in Kathmandu with Dhama Sahu. He was persuaded to give teachings on the basic text of the Nyingmapa Buddhist sect of Tibet. A large number of people came to hear his teachings, which in which he stressed: [97]

1. The preciousness of human birth;
2. Death and impermanence;
3. Karma and its results; and
4. The vicious state of *samsara*.

This discourse is called the *ngondhro* practice, that is, the preliminary practice. These four contemplations are called "four Jewels" in Newāri for it turns the mind towards the Dhamma. Venerable Kyangtse Lama's discourses were translated into Newāri and accepted widely by his followers. The Venerable Lama died in 1945 at Santipur while returning from his third visit to Nepal. Kyangtse Lama's visits to Nepal had a unique influence on Nepalese society. His influence is evident in the fact that thousands gathered to listen to his Dhamma discourses; the status of a lama became that of an influential teacher rather than that of a dirty person as believed before. His influence on Newāri scholars was significant. One of them was Yogbeer Sing Kansakar, who was honoured for his efforts for the preservation of the Newāri language. The Lama also influenced the first Theravāda monks Venerable Mahapragya and Venerable *Pragyānanda* among others.[98]

A. Nepal's First Yellow-Robed Monk

In 1922 Prem Bahādur Shrestha or Nanikaji,[99] the young Newāri who would become Venerable Mahapragya, attended the Venerable Lama's teachings in Dhama Sahu's home. He had not wanted to go but a friend persuaded him. He heard Kyangtse Lama's *ngondro* discourse and

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[96] Ratna Sunder Sakya, "Kyangtse Lama", **Ananda Bhumi**, vol. 20, no. 9, 1993, pp. 10ff.

[97] Phra Vipassi, op. cit., p. 95 (Footnotes).

[98] Ratna Sunder Sakya, 1993, op. cit., p. 13.

[99] See: Darasha Newami, 1983, op. cit., vol. I, II, III.

was greatly impressed. He developed a great desire for renunciation and asked Venerable Kyangtse Lama to take him to Tibet, but the Venerable Lama admonished him by saying that he could practice Dhamma in lay life. The life of a monk is not easy. The Lama prepared to return Tibet alone.[100] However, Mahapragya would not leave off the idea of renunciation. It is said that he was at home only in body; his mind was not at home. He wrote that there were many different thoughts wondering in his mind.

His desire to renounce the world increased when the next Tibetan Lama, *Kushyo Rimpoche*, the younger brother of H.H. the Thirteenth Dalai Lama visited Dhamam Sahu's house. Venerable Mahapragya met him and at once, out of faith, he asked for ordination. The Venerable Lama praised him highly for his strong desire for renunciation, but admonished him saying that it is not easy to do, and that Venerable Mahapragya could practice the Dhamma in Nepal as a householder. He refused to take him to Tibet. The Venerable Lama left for Tibet with some devotees. Venerable Mahapragya's desire to renounce the world was so strong that nobody could stop him. He went to Dhama Sahu's home early the morning after the Lama's departure, without saying anything about his purpose to his wife. He asked Dhama Sahu to give him permission follow the Venerable Lama.[101] Venerable Mahapragya's answer to Dhama Sahu's refusal was that he had already left his home and would not go back again. Dhama Sahu had to accede to his intention, and gave him some money for travel. Venerable Mahapragya went after the Venerable Lama and caught up with him on the path.[102] He and two other Newārs, Harsha dev Sakya of Ukum Baha, Lalitpur and Kancha Sakya of Punche Galli, Kathmandu, followed the Venerable Lama to Tibet. All of them were ordained as *gelung* (novices) of the Nyingmapa tradition of Tibet in Phakpa Gomba, Kerung (Kyirong) with Kushyo Rimpoche, a brother of the 13th Dalai Lama, as preceptor.

Nanikaji was given the Buddhist name Palden Shereb, the Tibetan equivalent of Mahapragya. This name remained throughout his life. Harsha Dev Sakya was given the name Palchen Khyarab (Mahagyana) and Kancha Sakya was given the name Palchen Dawa (Mahachandra). Later, another Newāri, Manjuharsha Sakya of Bhaktapur

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[100] B. P. Lacoul, 2042 BE, op. cit., p. 69.

[101] Without Dhama Sahu's permission, the Venerable Lama would not take him to Tibet.

[102] Darasha Newami, 1983, op. cit., p. 16-20; B. P. Lacoul, 2042 BE, op. cit., p. 69.

joined them, but too late to be ordained as a monk. Returning to the Kathmandu Valley in 1924, Harsha Deva went to Aaryagat and Venerable Mahapragya with Mahachandra went to Nagarjun hill (Jamacho) to live in a Tibetan Nyingmapa temple with Tsering Norbu. Three friends of Venerable Mahapragya, Dalchini Manandher who lent him the *Lalitavistara*, Bekharaj Sakya of Lalitapur, and Gyan Sakya from Hyumata in Kathamandu, visited him there at the temple. All three were ordained and given the monastic names, Mahagyana, Mahavirya, and Mahakshanti respectively.[103]

The five newly ordained monks were supported by Buddhists from Kathmandu and Lalitpur. They started going to Kathmandu and Lalitpur for alms-round and teaching Dhamma. That was to cause a great stir because they were the first Buddhist monks to appear in the streets of Nepal after King Jayasthiti Malla had banned them in the medieval period. Only a few days after their arrival in Kathmandu, a number of people gathered to listen to the Dhamma. During the rule of Prime Minister Chandra Samsera in 1925-1926 the Ranas had become aware that Venerable Mahapragya, a Shrestha Hindu by birth, had converted to Buddhism, and was preaching Dhamma in Nepal. In 1925 all five monks were arrested during their alms-round around the Hyumata Tola in Kathmandu City. They were imprisoned for four days. The Government at the time was under the influence of Shaivait Brahmins who were calling for a ban against Buddhism. Three new rules suppressing Buddhism had been issued:[104]

(1) Conversion to Buddhism from Hinduism (*Shaivaism)* to be punished by one year in prison;

(2) Acting as preceptor at a Buddhist ordination to be punished by three years' imprisonment; and

(3) Attempting to ordain into Buddhism to be punished by a six-month imprisonment.

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[103] Ratna Sunder Sakya, **Nepalko Etihashma Kalankit Ghatna**, (Kathmandu: Uwa Baudha Pucha Bhaktapur, 1991), p. 4-5; Lacoul, op. cit., pp. 69-71; Phra Vipassi, op. cit., p. 95.

[104] Ratna Sunder Sakya, **Baudha Risi Mahapragya,** (Kathmandu: Nepal Press, 1993), p. 10-11; R. S. Sakya, **Nepalko Etihashma Kalankit Ghatna**, op. cit., p. 5-6.

Therefore, after inquiries they expelled all five monks as well as Tsering Norbu, who had initiated them, to India. Venerable Tsering Norbu was also fined a sum of one hundred rupees and expelled in 1925.[105] After their expulsion, Venerable Tsering and his five followers lived in Raksol, India. Venerable Tsering took all his disciples on a pilgrimage to Buddhagaya, the place where the Buddha became enlightened. There they met a Burmese monk, Venerable U Kosala. A Theravādin, he was the first Theravāda monk they had ever seen. His calm and simple style of living impressed all of them. After having discussed with him they ordained as Theravāda *sāmaneras* under Venerable U Kosala. They thus became first modern Nepalese to ordain in the Theravāda tradition.[106] They studied the *sāmanera* precepts with Venerable U Kosala for 15 days and then went to Calcutta to live at the Mahābodhi Society. There they met *Dharmāditya Dharmācārya*, who was promoting Buddhist revival in Nepal. When *Dharmāditya Dharmācārya* realized that they had been expelled from Nepal, he took photographs of them and published them in newspapers and appeal to the Ranas to let them back in the country[107]. With the permission of Venerable Tsering Norbu, *Dharmāditya Dharmācārya* taught basic modern education to all five Nepalese monks. They lived there for nearly two months and then went to Kalingpong where they re-ordained in the Tibetan tradition under the Gyese Rimpoche as preceptor. While they were in the Theravāda Buddhism, they had not felt comfortable with the practice of not eating after noon, had always thought about the Tibetan tradition. Nevertheless, a few days later, Venerable Mahapragya went to Calcutta for study with *Dharmāditya Dharmācārya* and the Secretary of the Mahābodhi Society Mr. Devapriya Valisinha. After a few months, due to differences in the understanding of the Dhamma between Valisinha and Venerable Mahapragya, Venerable Mahapragya left for Buddhagaya, where he built a Buddhist monastery. The monastery was consecrated by the Burmese monk Venerable U Jyotika. After completion of the *vihāra*, he left the monastery and returned to Tibet after stopping at Kalingpong in 1926 (BS 1983).

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[105] According to B. P. Lacoul, (**Nepalaya Sthaviravada**, op.cit. p. 71) Tsering Norbu was already in Raksol, India.

[106] R. S. Sakya, **Baudha Risi Mahapragya**, op. cit., p. 12; R. S. Sakya, **Nepalko Etihashma Kalankit Ghatna**, op. cit., p. 7; Heinz Bechert & Hartmann Jens-Uwe, op. cit., p. 11.

[107] Sarah LeVine and Devid N. Gellner, Rebuilding Buddhism, (UK: Harvard University Press, 2005) p. 44

In 1928 Venerable Mahapragya returned from Lhasa to India after recovering from a sickness and studied Buddhism there. He went to Kusinagara where he came into contact with the Buddhist reform movement. He reordained as a Theravāda *sāmanera* with Venerable U Chandramani Mahāsthavir as preceptor.[108] Based on the 1926 Theravāda ordination of Venerable Mahapragya under Venerable U Kosala it can be said that the Theravāda ordination of Nepalese in modern times began in 1926. However, this is still controversial because Venerable Mahapragya and his compatriots changed direction by taking *geluk* vows in Kalingpong, and went to Tibet at their teacher's request. There were no more Theravāda ordinations of Nepalese until 1928. Nevertheless, Venerable Mahapragya re-entered in Theravāda tradition to become the first Nepalese monk and since that day, Nepal has continuously had Theravāda Buddhist monks.

B. The First Yellow-robed monk in Kathmandu

During Venerable Mahapragya's sickness in Lhasa he was treated by an *uday* healer (traditional physician, or *jharphuke vaidya*) named Kulaman Sing Tuladhar. Kulaman Sing treated him and was convinced by Venerable Mahapragya to renounce lay life. He did so in 1928 at the age of twenty-eight in the Tibetan Ghelungpa Tradition with Forankha Rimpoche as preceptor.[109] After taking *geluk* vows and the monastic name, Thile Chhulthim or Karmasheel,[110] he lived with Venerable Mahapragya, who assisted and advised him, and Venerable Mahavirya. They return to Nepal for the propagation of Buddhism but once they arrived at Kapakya they went into meditation practice in a cave near Kapakya.[111] Venerable Mahapragya and Venerable Mahavirya then left their meditation practice and went on pilgrimage to India. It was on this pilgrimage that Venerable Mahapragya re-ordained in the Theravāda tradition.

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[108] Darasha Newami (ed.), 1986, op.cit. p. 41.

[109] R. B. Vandya, **Sanghanayaka Venerable Pragyananda Mahasthabir; A Concise Biography**, (Kathmandu: Nepal co-operative Press Ltd., 1978), p. 9; B. P. Lacoul, **Nepalaya Sthavirvada**, op. cit., p. 72.

[110] He was given the name Phrin-las Tshul-khrims (tr.: Karmasheel) after ordination. Later, in 1932, he took the *upasampda* ordination in Arakan and becoming Bhikkhu Pragyananda (Heinz Bechert & Hartmann Jens-Uwe, 1988, op.cit., p. 9).

[111] Ratna Sunder Sakya, **Baudha Risi Mahapragya,** op. cit., p. 19; Ratna Sunder Sakya, **Nepalako Etihashama Kalankit Ghatna,** op. cit., p. 14-15.

After practicing eleven months of meditation, Venerable Karmasheel went to Kalingpong and met with Venerable Mahapragya, who had by then reordained into the Theravāda and studied Buddhism in Myanmar for three months. He devoted himself to ascetic practice and intensive meditation in Myanmar and took the higher ordination *(upasampada)* in 1929.[112] When Venerable Mahapragya met Venerable Karmasheel, he took Venerable Karmasheel on pilgrimage. Upon arriving in Kusinagara, Venerable Karmasheel met with Venerable U Chandramani and "under the advice and inspiration of the most Venerable Chandramani Mahathera he was converted from the sect of Lamaism to Theravāda school of Buddhism in the year 1930 C.E. or 2473 B.E. became a *Sāmanera* Karmasheel."[113] From the time that these two monks took ordination and studied Buddhism with Most Venerable U Chandramani, they dedicated their lives to the movement for the revival and development of Theravāda in Nepal.

The Venerable U Chandramani Mahathera was a Burmese monk who spent most of his life in Kusinagara working closely with *Anāgārika Dharmapāla*. Most of the early Nepalese Theravāda monks were ordained by him at Kusinagara. He was thus a pioneer of the revival of the Theravāda Sangha in Nepal, following the revival of Theravāda ideas by *Dharmāditya Dharmācārya* with the help of *Anāgārika Dharmapāla* of the Mahābodhi Society of India. In other words, it can be said that since that time, when the Mahābodhi Society and Venerable U Chandramani were in Kusinagara, it has remained an important place for the revival of Theravāda Buddhism in Nepal and a centre for Nepalese interested in Theravāda Buddhism.

These two senior monks, Venerable Mahapragya and Venerable Karmasheel, played significant initial roles in reviving and propagating Theravāda Buddhism in modern Nepal. However, they were still abroad in India, not in the Valley or even in Nepal and very few Nepalese at home were aware of them. Still under the order of expulsion, Venerable Mahapragya was allowed to return. From the time that Venerable Karmasheel took *sāmanera* vows in the Theravāda tradition, he studied Theravāda doctrines and philosophy with Venerable U Chandramani. Soon after his ordination, he decided to visit Nepal in order to propagate the true and correct Dhamma in the country of Buddha's birth, where

[112] Heinz Bechert & Hartmann Jens-Uwe, op. cit., p. 11.

[113] Ibid.; R. B. Vandya, op. cit., p. 10.

local Buddhists had long forgotten their heritage.[114] Around the end of 1930, Venerable Karmasheel travelled to Nepal. Accompanied by Venerable Mahapragya, he went to Raxaul on the border between Nepal.[115] Having faced the emigration authorities, Venerable Karmasheel continued on and the unusual sight of the first yellow-robed monk, a glimpse of the Theravāda tradition appeared on the streets of Kathmandu Valley. Some say that Venerable Karmasheel returned, and shortly afterwards, Venerable Mahapragya returned to the border disguised as a woman, slipped through the police post and went on to Kathmandu. These two were then the first Theravāda monks to appear inside modern Nepal.[116] Venerable Karmasheel was invited to stay in Kindol Vihāra by the lay Buddhist Dasha Ratna (Bara Shahu), later Venerable *Dhammāloka*, and Loka Ratna.[117] Dasha Ratna was very glad to have him because he had for a long time been worshiping the monks robes and bowls, that had been brought from Sri Lanka in 1930 as a symbol of Theravāda monk.[118]

Venerable *Pragyānanda* started the promotion and propagation of Theravāda Buddhism from here, accompanied by other devotees like Dasha Ratna Shahu. R. V. Vandya a biographer of Venerable *Pragyānanda*/ Karmasheel writes,

> Thus Venerable Karmasheel was the first yellow-robed monk to appear in the city of Kathmandu after the historic suppression of the order of monks and nuns in the reign of King Jayasthiti Malla in Nepal 600 years ago.[119]

However, about a year later Venerable Karmasheel went to Arakhan State of Myanmar to study Buddhism further under the guidance of the Most Venerable U Chandramani. While there, he took the higher ordination (*upasampampada*) and became Venerable *Pragyānanda*. Later, he became the first Theravāda Sanghamahanayaka of modern

[114] R. B. Vandya, op. cit., pp. 10-11.

[115] B. P. Lacoul, op. cit., p. 74.

[116] Venerable Mahapragya's entry into Nepal at this time is uncertain. When Venerable Karmasheel was in Kathmandu there are no records of him in Kathmandu with Venerable Karmasheel; especially, when Bara Shahu invited Venerable Karmasheel to stay at Kindol Vihāra, only Venerable Karmasheel is mentioned. Most scholars accepts Venerable Karmasheel was the first Theravāda monk to set foot within the borders of modern Nepal.

[117] R. V. Vandya, op. cit., p. 13.

[118] B. P. Lacoul, **Nepalaya Sthavirvada**, op. cit., p. 74.

[119] R.V. Vandya, op. cit., p. 13.

Nepal. After the conversion of these two gentlemen, Venerable Mahapragya and Venerable *Pragyānanda*, and their ordination, others began to seek ordination in the Theravāda tradition. Among them were Venerable *Dhammāloka*, or Baram Shahu, who had brought the *asthapariskhara* from Sri Lanka to Nepal as a symbol of monkhood, Venerable Sakyananda, who became the second Sanghanayaka of Nepal, Venerable Aniruddha the third Sanghanayaka, Venerable *Amritānanda* Mahanayaka, one of the pioneers and key persons in the revival and development of Theravāda Buddhism, and Venerable Subodhananda the present Sanghanayaka of Nepal. They all dedicated their lives to the revival and development of Theravāda Buddhism and became pillars of Theravāda Buddhism in Nepal. Since its revival many young people have converted to Buddhism.

2.6.2. Nepalese Nuns Ordination in Theravāda

Anāgārikas, or Buddhist nuns, also played important roles in the development of Theravāda Buddhism in Nepal. At the beginning, those who ordained as *anāgārikās* were only widows and old women who had not had the opportunity to receive a proper education. Therefore, their status was not high and they were not accepted by society. Even if they became homeless their status was inferior. Their main role, consequently, was to assist the monks in their revival activities. However, one, Laksminani, or *Anāgārikā Dhammacāri*, who supported the monks and Buddhist activities at Kindol Vihāra from the beginning, and became an *ānāgārikā* in 1936 (1993 BS) in Kusinagara, was notable among the first generation of nuns. She was a leader of the first generation and a well-known speaker at that time too.[120] Phra Vipassi notes in his MA Thesis that *Anāgārikā Khemacāri* was also a notable nun, on a par with *Anāgārikā* Dharmachari.[121] Presently, there are many *anāgārikās* who have obtained higher educations both inside and outside the country. They run many social activities and are one of the important elements in the development of Buddhist education. They no longer hold inferior status to monks and are respected in Nepalese society just as the monks are.

The ordination of women as *ānāgārikās* was initiated at the time that Venerable Karmasheel first returned to Nepal after becoming a

[120] B.P. Lacoul, **Nepalaya Sthavirvada**, op. cit., p. 79.
[121] Phra Vipassi, op. cit., p. 142.

Theravāda monk in 1930-1. During Venerable Karmasheel's stay at Kindol Vihāra, he taught Dhamma to the devotees and went on alms round (*pindapata*) around the city. His smooth voice, moral way of life, and his impressive discourses attracted new devotes day by day. His behaviour and teachings inspired four Nepalese devotees to give up the householder life and to take up ordination. They were taken to Kusinagara for their ordination. The four devotees were (I) *Sāmanera* Shasana Jyoti, (II) *Anāgārikā Ratnapāli*, (III) *Anāgārikā Dharmapāli* and (IV) *Anāgārikā Sanghapāli*.[122] They received ordination under the guidance of Venerable U Chandramani Mahathera. The ordination of *Sāmanera* Shasana Jyoti was easily done according to Theravāda tradition but the ordination of nuns was not so easy as *sāmanera* ordination, since the lineage of Theravāda nuns had died out in the eleventh century. They were unable to become *bhikkhunis*, or take the *bhikkhuni upasampadā* or even the *sāmaneri pabbajjā* within the Theravāda tradition. However, those women who wished to ordain were permitted to vow to permanently observe the eight or ten precepts (*dasasila*),[123] Venerable U Chandramani gave them the ten precepts, thus ordaining them as *ānāgārikās*. This form of women's ordination is an acceptable alternative in the Theravāda tradition that has been introduced in various similar forms in Theravāda countries. In Myanmar the nuns are referred to as *thilāsheyn*, in Sri Lanka, *dasasilāmātā*, in Thailand, *maechi (obser 8 precepts)*, and in Nepal, *ānāgārikā*. It is believed that Venerable U Chandramani borrowed the title from *Anāgārikā Dharmapāla*. They observed ten precepts and changed their saris for the pink and orange robes worn by Burmese *thilāsheyn.* This was the first Theravāda ordination of Nepali nuns in modern times.

Later, other nuns ordained and returned to Nepal, joining them at Kindol Vihāra. One of them was *Anāgārikā Dhammacāri*, who had played an important role in the Theravāda revival movement from the time that she was a layperson at Kindol Vihāra. *Anāgārikā Dhammacāri* had married at the age of twelve, but lost her husband and children in her early twenties. She took an interest in Buddhism and later, under the guidance of Venerable Kittiya Mahasthaver, ordained as an *anāgārikā* at Kusinagara. She studied many kinds of books on Buddhism and taught Dhamma especially among the female devotees.[124]

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[122] R. B. Vandya, op. cit., p. 15.
[123] *Anāgārikā*s observe eight precepts (Phra Vipassi, op. cit., p. 142).
[124] B. P. Lacoul, **Nepalaya Sthavirvada**, op. cit., p. 79.

Within a few years, more and more women ordained, as did men. Some of the nuns went to study abroad. However, due to social conditions, for example prostitution and poverty, very few were able to study abroad. At the same time, Buddhist countries like Thailand, Myanmar, and Sri Lanka did not yet have proper Buddhist educational facilities for ordained women. Therefore, after their ordination, many remained in Nepal and managed Buddhist activities for the development of Buddhism and the uplift of Nepalese society. Those who went abroad to study eventually returned and participated in the propagation campaign. They are as well respected in the society as are the monks. Even though, the religion itself makes distinctions between monks and nuns, there are no such social distinctions made by Nepalese Buddhists.

Chapter III

Development of Theravāda Buddhism

3.1. Dharmodaya Sabhā and New Directions

The isolationist *Rānā* regime was a dark age in the history of Nepal because of its autocratic and uncaring rule. The regime forbade attempts to introduce the Buddhist reform movement into Nepal. Furthermore, they prohibited conversion from Hinduism to any other religion (mainly Buddhism) and were intolerant towards the minority languages of Nepal, including Nepal Bhāsā. When some Newār Buddhists converted to Tibetan Buddhism in 1926, they were arrested and expelled from the country. Similarly, when the Theravāda mission was being introduced to Kathmandu Valley the *Rānā* regime arrested the participants. They, too, were fined and exiled. The *Rānā* isolationist regime attempted to uproot the movement, but ordained monks seemed to appear one after another in this period. As a result of their effort and commitment, within a decade of the beginning of the Theravāda revival movement, many Nepalese were ordained and playing important roles in the movement. The year 1942 was a turning point for the revival of Theravāda Buddhism in Nepal. This was the year that Venerable *Amritānanda* returned from abroad and gave public Dhamma discourses at the hill of Swayambhu. In the same period other monks and nuns who had gone abroad to study returned to Nepal and gave public discourses at different places within Kathmandu Valley. This was during the rule Maharaj Prime Minister Juddha Samsher *Rānā*. A large number of people participated in the programmes. The *Rānā* isolationist regime could not tolerate their presence in the country, and Buddhist reform activists were arrested. They were ordered to sign certain documents or to leave the country within three days. Venerable *Amritānanda* wrote a letter of appeal to the Mahābodhi Society of India. The following is excerpted from that letter.

> The govenrnment of Nepal has recently expelled all "Theravāda" Buddhist monks from the country…they are not foreigners...have not committed any offence either political religious or otherwise. But in spite of all that without any justifiable reason and without any previous warning or notice these monks were served with an order on 30th July last containing the following conditions:[125]
>
> 1. No converts to be made to the Buddhist fold
>
> 2. Nobody to be initiated into the order of monks not even born Buddhists
>
> 3. No sermons to be preached to the laity even if they come to the monasteries.
>
> 4. No religious ceremonies to be performed or festivals to be observed
>
> 5. No Buddhist monks or nuns to remain in Nepal unless he or she became a layman or laywomen.

The monks all refused to comply with these orders and were happy to be exiled for their activities promoting the revival of Theravāda. They were ordered to leave the country within three days. This occurred during the rains-retreat (*vassā*). The monks explained the religious prohibition against leaving their *vihāras* during the time of the rains-retreat. Even so, the order was not modified. It was written that there was not any single condition, which a freedom-loving and self-respecting person could agree to.[126] In the case of monks, the expulsion order was carried out immediately; but for the nuns, because travelling during the rainy season was considered too difficult for women, expulsion was delayed to the end of the rains-retreat.[127] The exiled monks went to different parts of India and to other countries and began an organizational campaign. They thus changed the Theravāda revival movement in Nepal from a matter of individual dedication and effort to an organizational

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[125] N. B. Bajracharya, **Amritanjali, A Homage**, op. cit., p. 95-96.

[126] Ibid., p. 96.

[127] U Sein Tun Aung (tr.), **The Life Story of Sri Bhaddhanta Chandramani Mahathera** (Culcatta: published by U Chandramani foundation, 2002), p. 86.

effort. They formed one Buddhist organization as the centre for these activities and called it "Dharmodaya Sabhā".

A. Establishment of Dharmodaya Sabhā

The exiled monks in India, due to the hot climate wondered like poor animals, on the verge of death.[128] They were advised to form a society in order to maintain some sort of cohesion among themselves. On 30th November 1944, a meeting was held at Sāranāth by the monks, some philanthropists living at that time in India, and the Dharmodaya Sabhā[129] was founded with Most Venerable U Chandramani Mahathera as Chairman, Bhadanta Ananda Kaushalyayana as Vice-president, Venerable *Amritānanda* as General Secretary, Venerable Mahanama as Joint Secretary, Maniharsha Jyoti, the wealthy trader and later industrialist of Nepal, as Treasurer. Venerable Mahapragya, Venerable *Dhammāloka* and Venerable Subodhananda were all members of the Sabhā.[130] It had certain objectives which were mostly adopted from those of the Mahābodhi Society:[131]

1. To open Buddhist schools throughout Nepal;

2. To build a *vihāra* in every town or village where the majority of the people were Buddhists, and to have one or two monks in residence to provide religious instruction and free medical services;

3. To publish translations of canonical texts as well as other books on Buddhism in Nepali and Newāri;

4. To propagate Buddhism through education;

5. To publish two journals, one in English and one in Nepali;

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[128] Janak Newa, "Dharmodaya Sabhā Yesterday and Today" http://www.buddhistview.com/site/epage/3036_225.htm.

[129] Kuladharma Ratna, **Buddhism and Nepal**, op. cit., p. 18.

[130] Ven. *Dhammāloka*, 1999, op. cit., p. 95, 125. The organization, according to this source was founded 31 November 1944.

[131] Ria Kloppenborg, "Theravāda Buddhism in Nepal", op. cit., p. 307-308.

6. To persuade the Nepalese authorities to take the necessary steps to preserve ancient Buddhist monuments and sites (e.g. Lumbini and Kapilavattu);

7. To encourage Buddhists of other countries to visit Nepal and to offer facilities to Buddhist scholars;

8. To guard against institutions active in converting people to other faiths.

For the realization of their programme they requested assistance from other Buddhist nations, especially in providing scholarships to Nepalese students and in giving moral and material support.

The overall objectives of Dharmodaya Sabhā can be summarized by three main ideas:[132]

1. Composing and publishing Buddhist books;

2. Promoting education by providing scholarships to monks and other Buddhist students;

3. To be duty-bound to the Buddhist religion.

Led by Venerable *Amritānanda*, the General Secretary, the Sabhā immediately it had been formed at Kusinagara, engaged in activities in accord with these principles. Similarly, while the monks were in exile, many devotees extended immeasurable support and assistance to them. Darmaditya Dharmacharya, for example, who had initiated the Buddhist revival activities, formed the Nepalese Buddhist Organization in order to help those exiled monks and to support the propagation of Buddhism; Sri Maniharsa Jyoti, a well-known Buddhist supporter can be compared to Anathapindika[133] for his large-scale support for the exiled monks and for the revival and development of Buddhism in modern Nepal from the very beginning.

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[132] Janak Newa, "Dharmodaya Sabhā Yesterday and Today", op. cit.; **The Constitution of Dharmoday Sabhā "2043"**, (Dharmodaya Sabhā: Buddha Vihāra, 1986).

[133] Anāthapindika was a well-known patron of Buddhism in the time of the Buddha.

Venerable *Amritānanda* Mahāsthavir visited many countries after the formation of the Dharmodaya Sabhā in order to protest the expulsion of the monks and ask for support for Buddhist revival activities in Nepal. He wrote "I visited each and every Buddhist society in India and appealed them to protest to the Government of Nepal against the expulsion of the monks."[134] Moreover, he wrote letters to other Theravāda countries requesting their support for the revival campaign. His efforts helped to expose the situation of Theravāda Buddhism in Nepal to the world. Venerable *Amritānanda* wrote that the Government of Nepal would allow them to return only if they were born as Nepali Buddhists and not converts from Hinduism or any other religion. The followers of the other religions such as Islam, Hinduism, Christian, he wrote, were allowed to lead their religious life without any interference from the Government. The condition, that they could live in Nepal only as laymen and not otherwise, he wrote, was a gross injustice and indeed an insult to the whole Buddhist world.[135] Many meetings were held in several countries concerning the monk's expulsion by the *Rānā* regime and protest letters were written to the Government of Nepal. The Mahābodhi Society of Ceylon wrote:

> It gave me a great shock to hear that the Nepalese Theravāda Bhikshus have been driven away from Nepal….If those who are exiled have no place to stay they are all welcome at Sarnath.[136]

Many other Buddhist countries and organizations also wrote protest letters to the Government of Nepal, urging it to allow the exiled monks to return to Nepal and to engage in Buddhist activities. With Venerable *Amritānanda* leading on behalf of the Sabhā and of the whole of the Buddhist community of Nepal, both Sangha and laity became involved in these movement activities. In response to the Mahābodhi Society's letter protesting the expulsion, the Government of Nepal wrote, "The conversion to Buddhism was taken as a penal offence and they became guilty on conversion to Buddhist from Hindu."[137]

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[134] N. B. Bajracharya, **Amritanjali A Homage**, op. cit., p. 94.
[135] Ibid., p. 97
[136] Ibid., p. 101-2
[137] Ibid., p. 99

B. Dharmodaya Sabhā and Mission

From the time that the Dharmodaya Sabhā was founded, all the Nepalese monks worked together and appealed for help from different countries and Buddhist organizations. The Sabhā played an indispensable role in giving direction to the movement to establish Theravāda Buddhism in Modern Nepal. The exiled Nepalese monks went to different places for further study and campaigned to be allowed to return to Nepal. The Dharmodaya Sabhā was established as a direct result of the expulsions of the monks from Nepal. Within a short period of its establishment, the members had spread the story of the expulsions throughout the Buddhist world. Venerable *Amritānanda* went to Sri Lanka to organize a protest campaign and succeeded in bringing a goodwill mission from Sri Lanka to Nepal in 1946.[138] That mission was led by the Most Venerable Nārada Mahathera of Vajiraramaya, Colombo. It was an important success in that, as a result, the Nepalese Government reversed its stand on the exiled monks. The delegation met with the Maharaja Prime Minister Padma Shumsher *Rānā* and secured permission for the monks to return to Nepal at once. The Most Venerable Nārada Mahathera was also able to obtain permission to build a Ceylonese style stupa at Ananda Kuti Vihāra. Venerable *Dhammāloka*[139] was the first monk to return from exile, returning immediately upon receiving the letter from Venerable *Amritānanda* in Kalimpong. The others returned one by one within the next few months. The lay followers welcomed them home. Since their return from exile in 1946 the Theravādins have founded several new *vihāras* within Kathmandu Valley. Venerable U Chandramani Mahathera donated a marble Buddha image to Ananda Kuti Vihāra, which could be said to be the first Theravāda art introduced into modern Nepal.

The Most Venerable Nārada Mahathera visited Nepal a second time in 1947 with a relic of the Buddha and a sapling of the sacred Bodhi Tree from Anuradhapura, Sri Lanka. The sacred relic was enshrined in the stupa at Ananda Kuti Vihāra. The Bodhi tree sapling was planted and the *sima* (*uposathagara*, boundary marker of consecrated ground) was established at the Vihāra. This was the first Theravāda *sima* in modern

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[138] After several years of study in Sri Lanka Venerable *Amritānanda* returned to Nepal and gave public discourses. After only 2 years all propagators were ordered into exiled.

[139] Ven. *Dhammāloka*, **A Pilgrimage in China**, op. cit., p. 98-100.

Nepal.[140] In Theravāda tradition, once there are *sima,* stupa, and a Bodhi tree on the grounds of a temple, the temple or hall is fully consecrated as an *uposatha* hall, and Theravāda Buddhism is considered to have been established. Before the establishment of this *uposatha* hall any Nepalese who wished to be ordained had go to India or some other country in order to became "homeless" a *pabbajja* or *upasampada*. Once this *uposatha* hall had been established Nepalese who wished ordain but were unable to travel to India, took ordination here and a new Theravāda generation emerged in Nepal. Gradually, Theravāda Buddhism gained ground in Modern Nepal.

The Dharmodaya Sabhā carried out its objectives by publishing a monthly Buddhist magazine, **Dharmodaya**, in the Nepal Bhāsā language. The first issue was published in 1946 (Koula, 1067 Nepal Era) and made quite an impression on its readers.[141] It was the first monthly Buddhist magazine in modern Nepal, and the first to be published by Buddhist Monks. The Sabhā has also published several Buddhist books since it was founded.

In 1947 the Dharmodaya Sabhā moved from Sāranāth into its own premises at Kalimpong. On 4th November 1949 Venerable Mahanama and Venerable Aniruddha took over responsibility for the magazine after the resignation of Venerable *Amritānanda* as Secretary and Publisher.[142] Given the success of Dharmodaya Sabhā with its readers abroad, Venerable *Amritānanda* hoped to establish a branch in Shrigha Vihāra, Kathamandu. After the *Rānā* isolationist regime was overthrown 1950-1951 (Vaisakha, 2007 BE) the headquarters of Dharmodaya Sabhā was shifted to Kathmandu.[143]

After the Dharmodaya Sabhā had been established in Nepal, it was able to extend its activities and to freely profess faith in Buddhism. It became familiar to the people of every religion and language, and in Nepalese literature. With the cooperation of Buddhist monks and laity, the Sabhā performed many important activities in Kathmandu Valley. *Baisakha Purnima* or Vesak Day was celebrated under the patronage of

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[140] K. R. Tuladhar, **Buddhism in Nepal**, op. cit., p. 19.

[141] Phra Vipassi, 2001, op. cit., p. 107; R. S. Sakya, **Sanghanayaka Bhikkhu Aniruddha Mahāsthavir**, 1998, op. cit., p. 5.

[142] R. S. Sakya, 1998, op. cit., p. 5.

[143] K. R. Tuladhar, **Buddhism in Nepal**, op. cit., p. 19.

His majesty King Tribhuwan at Ananda Kuti Vihāra. Among other important activities they conveyed sacred relics of the Buddha's two chief disciples, Sāriputta and Moggallana, to Nepal. The relics were welcomed by King himself at his palace. In 1955 representatives of Dharmodaya Sabhā participated in the World Religionists Conference in Japan. In the following year, 1956, Dharmodaya Sabhā, with the cooperation of Buddhist monks and the Government, was successful in organising the Fourth General Conference of the World Fellowship of Buddhists in the land of the Buddha's birth, Nepal. In that same year, Venerable *Amritānanda*, President of Dharmodaya Sabhā, was invited to participate in the year 2500 BE *Buddha Jayanti* celebrations in India, as Honorary Chairman of the Working Committee.[144] The Government of Nepal announced the prohibition of animal sacrifice and the killing the animals on *Buddha Jayanti* throughout the nation. The spread of Buddhism continued day-by-day. Many other Buddhist organizations were founded. One of the important organizations that contributed greatly to the development and continued presence of Theravāda Buddhism, ensuring its place in Nepal, was the *Akhil Nepal Bhikkhu Mahasangha (All Nepal Bhikkhu Association)*, which continues to play a central a role today in Theravāda activities throughout the country.

3.2. Progress with the Support of Kings

As soon as the isolationist *Rānā* regime was overthrown in 1951 and under the leadership of His Majesty King Tribhuwan, the father of the Nation *(Rastra Pita)*, Nepal was returned to the monarchical system. During the years of the isolationist *Rānā* regime, not only was Buddhism a minor religion, but also Buddhist religious activities were suppressed and conversion to Buddhism was prohibited. Buddhist activities were permitted only to the traditionally Buddhist ethnic groups, such as the Sakya and Vajracharya clans. The *Rānā* regime was a Hindu State. When, that regime was thrown out, King Tribhuwan supported Buddhism in part as a symbolic anti-*Rānā* gesture. His Majesty King Tribhuwan and later Kings participated in different Buddhist activities held by Buddhist monks throughout the country. Moreover, as chairman of the Buddhist community of Nepal, His Majesty King Tribhuwan made arrangements to invite holy Buddhist relics to Nepal. When the relics arrived, he enshrined them in the palace for two nights to ensure the happy, peaceful, and successful beginning to the newly founded and energised

[144] Ibid., p. 23.

monarchical state. Within a short period after the revival of Theravāda Buddhism in Nepal, the Buddhists of Nepal, under the leadership of Buddhist monks, successfully organized an international Buddhist conference with the support and patronage of the King. With the support and patronage of the King's Government, Theravāda Buddhism spread and gained much ground in Nepalese society in a short time. Under the leadership of the monks, many people participated in many different activities throughout the country; most of them were sponsored by the Government and notable businessmen of Nepal.

A. The Relics Celebration

Although as previously mentioned there was occasional help from the State authorities, the lack of Government support was the one of the most pressing problems for the revival of the Sangha in modern Nepal. From the beginning of the re-establishment of the monarchy, Venerable *Amritānanda* was able to approach His Majesty King Tribhuwan, who accepted Buddhism as an alternative to the Brahmanical orthodoxy of the *Rānā* regime. Venerable L. Ariyawansa Nayaka Mahathera of Sri Lanka writes in his condolences that the history of the revival of Buddhism in Nepal was a very painful episode, full of rises and falls. In comparison to Their Majesties King Tribhuwan and King Mahendra, Bir Bikram Shah Deva and other former rulers of Nepal were not at all generous or sympathetic towards the spread of Buddhism in the country. The practice of Buddhism was banned and the monks were sent into exile.[145] Therefore, after the political changes of 1951, the adoption Buddhism by His Majesty King Tribhuwan initiated a very liberal policy and all the damage was repaired. With the support of the State, many remarkable events took place in that year. Within a month of the political change, the Nepalese Sangha borrowed relics of Venerable Sāriputta and Venerable Moggallāna, *arahants* and the two chief disciples of the Buddha, from the Mahābodhi Society of Calcutta, bringing them to Nepal for exhibition. Venerable Mahanama, Secretary of the Dharmodaya Sabhā wrote to the Home Affairs minister of Nepal concerning the reception of Relics:

> Nepal is affectionately referred to, by the Buddhist all over the world, as the sacred motherland of Lord Buddha. We have come to know that the people of Nepal, both Buddhist and Hindus, are

[145] N. B. Bajracharya, **Amritanjali**, op. cit., p. 48.

> eagerly waiting for the happy opportunity of receiving the blessing of the Sacred Relics in Nepal…we are also sure that the presence of these Sacred Relics in Nepal will result in peace, tranquillity and prosperity throughout the country.[146]

A semi-official sacred relics reception committee was formed with the following members:[147]

President: His Majesty King Tribhuwan,

Vice-presidents: Ministers of Home affairs Sri B. P. Koirala and Minister of Commerce

Secretary: Venerable *Amritānanda* Mahāsthavir

Assistant Secretary: Sri Kuladharmaratna and Sri Kulratna

Publicity Officers: Professor Narayan Bahādur, Sri Daya Bir Singh, and Sri Tirth Narayan

His Majesty the King was graciously pleased to receive the sacred relics at the airport with a 31-gun salute and a one-night reception was held at the Narayanhity Royal Palace before they were conducted to different places for worship, and the following day to Ananda Kuti Vihāra.[148] On this occasion, His Majesty the King spoke to the people of Nepal. Full of happiness on the reception day, he declared:[149]

> Today's event shows us once again that there is an ideal yet to be pursued by mankind, and that is the ideal of the Buddha. When the world is groping in the dark, the solitary light of the great Buddha beckons us and guides our steps.
>
> Our country is undergoing a tremendous change and the process of change necessarily brings about some kind of

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146 Ibid., p. 120.

147 Kuladharma Ratna, "Buddhism in Nepal", **Dharmodaya Sabhā**, 4th Buddhist Conference, Kathmandu, n.d., p. 16.

148 Venerable *Amritānanda*, 1986, op. cit., p. 11; Kuladharma Ratna, **Buddhism in Nepal**, op. cit., p. 17.

149 Kuladharma Ratna, **Buddhism and Nepal**, op. cit., p. 20.

> dislocation in the psychology of the people as also in the social and political structure. After a great shake-up, Nepal has taken the first decisive steps towards Democracy. Old order is giving place to new. But it is a matter of pride for the people and my Government that normalcy was so soon restored and the country made to advance along peaceful lines towards democracy based on social justice.[150]

Thousands of people came every day for a fortnight to pay their respects to the holy relics at Ananda Kuti Vihāra. On this auspicious occasion, His Majesty the King, as a Buddhist *upasaka* and Her Majesty the Queen, as a Buddhist *upasikā*, invited the monks to the Royal Palace for *dāna*.

B. The *Baisakha* Celebration

Baisākha purnimā or Vesak Day (*Swānyā Punhi* in Newāri) is one of the most important days on the Buddhist calendar. Every year throughout the world Buddhists celebrate *Baisakha purnimā* and are filled with joy and happiness. But there was one country, the land where the Buddha was born, Nepal, in which this day had been forgotten for many centuries. Vesak full-moon days came and went, but no one in Nepal acknowledged them. The revival of this holy day became a key part in the revival of Theravāda Buddhism in Nepal. *Dharmāditya Dharmācārya*, one of those who took a pioneering role in the revival campaign, understood the importance of *Baisakha* Day. He believed that once the observance of Vesak Day had spread throughout Nepalese society, Theravāda Buddhism would gain in acceptability. When it came to be widely practiced, he believed, it would help to revive Theravāda Buddhism in Nepal.[151] Therefore, he emphasized the importance of Vesak Day in his Newāri language journal, **Buddhadharma**. This journal was first issued on the day of the first Vesak celebration in modern Nepal.

The Vesak celebration programme was published inside of front cover of **Buddhadhamma**, which was very effective and attractive. The programme was:[152]

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[150] Ria Kloppenborg, op. cit., p. 8.
[151] Lacoul, **Nepalaya Sthavirvada,** op. cit., p. 51.
[152] Lacoul, **Buddhadharma wo Nepal Bhāsā Muna**, op. cit., no page number.

Morning session

1. *Tiratna sarana*, take the eight precepts

2. *Buddhapuja*

3. Chanting *paritta*

4. Recitation of *Lalitavistara*

5. Visit Buddhist monasteries and pay homage to the Buddha

6. *Swaddyaya* Chanting and promotion of chanting among the devotees

7. Lunch

Afternoon session

8. Procession of the Buddha image around the city

9. Chanting the *Dhammacakkappavatana Sutta* and promotion

10. Dhamma discussion

11. Discussion of the future plans of "Buddha Dharma Uddhar Sangha"

It is said that *Dharmāditya Dharmācārya* gave *upasaka* and *upasika* "ordination"[153] into the Theravāda tradition to all the members of his organization. Therefore, the first celebration of Vesak was the day that Theravāda Buddhists first appeared in modern Nepal. This celebration played a significant role not only in the revival of Theravāda Buddhism but also in promoting the recognition of sacred Buddhist sites. Through this celebration, Lumbini, the place where the Buddha was born was preserved and became the main inspiration for the revival of all Buddhist traditions in Nepal, Tibetan and Newār as well as Theravāda.

The Vesak celebration is one of the main Buddhist activities that have enjoyed His Majesty's support. At the same time, it has become a key to the liberation of Buddhists in Nepal. In 1947 Venerable *Amritānanda* succeeded in bringing a goodwill mission from Sri Lanka, and participated in the negotiations between missionaries and the *Rānā* regime for the readmission of the exiled Theravāda monks to Nepal. Prime Minister Mohan Samsher gave his assent. On his third visit to Nepal, the Most Venerable Nārada Mahathera requested that Vesak Day

[153] *Upāsaka* and *upāsikā* are simply the Pali terms for Buddhist laymen and laywomen respectively.

be declared a public holiday. Once again Prime Minister Mohan Samsher assented and declared *Baisakha* Day or Vesak Day a public holiday for all Buddhist Government officials.[154]

Within one year of the restoration of the Monarchy in 1951, the Nepalese Sangha invited His Majesty the King, the Crown Prince, and their ministers to attend a celebration of *Baisakha Purnima* Day at Ananda Kuti Vihāra. On this occasion, on behalf of His Majesty, the Home Minister Honourable Bishweshwar Prasad Koirala announced that "His Majesty's Government has been pleased to declare *Baisakha Day* a National holiday." It was the second positive step by the State for the development of Theravāda Buddhism in Nepal. In the following year, 1953, on His Majesty the King's birth anniversary, a Sangha delegation including Venerable *Amritānanda* was invited to the Royal palace where the Sangha performed a nightlong *mahaparitta* (known in Nepal by the Sanskrit, *mahāparitrān*), a protective ritual chant. At the end of the chanting His Majesty offered *dāna* to the Sangha and provided them and their lay devotees with a feast. In 1954 the *mahaparitta* recitation was shifted to Ananda Kuti Vihāra where it has been performed each year since on the birth anniversary of the reigning King. Enlisting the support of His Majesty the King of Nepal was perhaps the greatest service that Venerable *Amritānanda* rendered to the Buddhist cause. Moreover, in 1956 His Majesty King Mahendra prohibited the killing of animals, including ritual sacrifice, on *Baisakha* Day. With the support of the Kings Theravāda Buddhism progressed rapidly in the country.

C. The Fourth WFB Conference

On the remarkable day of *Buddha Jayanti* or *Baisakha* Day on 2,500th anniversary of the *Parinibbāna* of the Buddha in early 1956, the Buddhists of Nepal hosted the Fourth World Fellowship of Buddhists (WFB) General Conference in Kathmandu. This was the first international Buddhist conference ever held in Nepal. Conducted with the support of His Majesty the King the conference was a turning point for the development of Theravāda in Nepal. Throughout the Buddhist world there was hope that this auspicious anniversary would inspire serious reform of the religion. At this same time, the Sixth Buddhist Council was being held in Rangoon.[155] The report of the Third Conference in Sri

[154] Bhikkhu *Amritānanda*, op. cit., p. 10.
[155] See Heinz Bechert and Jens-uwe Hartmann, op. cit., p. 12-13.

Lanka mentions the Government's organizational and financial support; King Tribhuwan similarly took a personal interest in the Conference. The message of His Majesty King Tribhuwan concludes thus:[156]

> I am happy to let all of you know on this auspicious occasion that my government is intending to invite a World Buddhist Conference on the occasion of the Buddha Sambat 2,500.

On the same occasion former Prime Minister B. P. Koirala said of the conference that,

> it is a privilege for us to be associated with this conference and I have the pleasure to inform you that the fourth WBC will be held in Nepal under the auspices of the Dharmodaya Sabhā to which the Government of Nepal have assured full support in holding it. I hope the proposal will be acceptable and I look forward to meeting you in this sacred birth-place of Lord Buddha.[157]

The proposal was unanimously accepted at a conference in Colombo, Sri Lanka and Venerable *Amritānanda* was elected as a Vice-chairman of the World Federation of Buddhists.

Sadly, His Majesty King Tribhuwan passed away a year before the WFB conference was held in Nepal. The Conference was opened by his son His Majesty King Mahendra in Singha Darbar Hall in Kathmandu on 14th November 1956.

His Majesty King Tribhuwan had sponsored and supported many Buddhist activities for the development of Buddhism. Significant among them are the invitation of the relics of the Buddha's two chief disciples, inviting the foreign delegates to the Palace for dinner, and the recitation of the *mahaparitta* on His Majesty's birthday in 1951, a rite that has been repeated every year with State sponsorship on the reigning King's birthday. The *mahaparitta* recitation is the only Theravāda ceremony continuously and directly sponsored by the Kings of Nepal to the present day. His Majesty King Tribhuwan's final significant acts

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[156] Kuladharma Ratna, op. cit., p. 18.
[157] Ibid., p. 18.

included the invitation to hold the Fourth World Buddhist Conference in Nepal, and his message to the Sixth Buddhist Council in Myanmar.

The Fourth World Buddhist Conference was supported by the Government of Nepal in co-operation with the All Nepal Bhikkhu Sangha and the Dharmodaya Sabhā. Delegations from over forty countries participated. During the conference, the importance of foreign support of Nepalese Buddhism was repeatedly emphasized. The ideal of Nepal as a Buddhist country and the comparison of its King with King Ashoka appear frequently in the proceedings of the Conference.[158] His Majesty the King invited all the participants to the Palace for refreshments and his mother presented gifts to all the participants from abroad. This was part of the marvellous support of the Royal Family for the development and recognition of Buddhism in Nepal. From the report of this WFB General Conference in Kathmandu and from other sources it is clear what great expectations the Buddhists of Nepal shared with regard to further developments.[159]

His Majesty King Mahendra showed less interest in Buddhism than had his father and he developed no special relationship with Venerable *Amritānanda*. The prospects of significant State backing for the Theravāda development began to dim. Nonetheless, His Majesty visited Lumbini, a sacred place of Buddhist pilgrimage, and erected there the Mahendra Pillar. The Government of His Majesty announced that henceforth animal sacrifice would be banned throughout the Kingdom on the day of *Buddha Jayanti*, thus effectively giving Buddhism a place second only to Hinduism in Nepal. His Majesty was also able to enlist international support for the development of Lumbini as a project of the United Nations. The renovation of Lumbini was also an important factor in the development of Buddhism in modern Nepal. The Government plan was to develop Lumbini as an international centre for pilgrims. However, in the year 1959, King Mahendra dismissed the multi-party Government and issued the Panchayat Policy. He banned political parties and the regime looked to Hinduism for legitimacy. Under the Panchayat Policy, Buddhism was tolerated and encouraged only as a branch of Hinduism. State support for Buddhist movement activities was fading. However, many Buddhist monasteries had already been built and the Venerable

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[158] Kedar Sakya, "Nepalma Viswo Baudha Sammelan: Etihasika Paksya", **Ananda Bhumi**, vol. 14, no. 7, 1986, p. 5.

[159] Ria Kloppenborg, op. cit., p. 309.

monks continued their activities for the development of Buddhism in Nepal.

In 1984 at the fourteenth World Buddhist Conference in Sri Lanka the Government of His Majesty the King Birendra announced: "My people and my Government hope to host the Fifteenth World Buddhist Conference of the World Fellowship of Buddhists in Nepal."[160]

The Nepalese Government's expressed invitation to host the Fifteenth WFB Conference in Nepal 30 years after the Fourth WFB Conference had been held there was surely influenced by Lumbini, the birthplace of the Buddha.[161] His Highness Prince Gyanendra (who would accede the throne in 2001) opened the Fifteenth WFB World Conference at Dasarath Rangasala, the National Stadium, in Kathmandu. Delegations from 27 countries and representatives of 300 Buddhist organizations participated in the Conference. In opening the Conference, His Majesty emphasised the importance of peace in the world and Lumbini as a symbol of world peace. He spoke of the support that Their Majesties King Tribhuvan, King Mahendra, and King Birendra had given for the development of Buddhism and peace in the nation and in the world.[162] The main topic of this conference was Lumbini and its development, with the theme "Lumbini, A symbol of World Peace". His Highness Prince Gyanendra and Princess Komal Rajya Lakmi Devi Shah invited the delegates to the Sital Niwas Palace for refreshments.

Their Majesties the Kings' activities and support throughout the revival of Theravāda Buddhism in Nepal, shows their support for the cause of Buddhism in Nepal, though the Kings themselves profess the Hindu faith. Their Majesties participate in the *mahaparitta*, the only Theravāda ceremony directly sponsored by the Kings and in *Baisakha Purnima* celebrations every year. Their Majesties also participate on special occasions in events that are organized by Buddhist organizations. Their Majesties have also participated in *Baisakha Purnima* celebration at Ananda Kuti Vihāra every two years.

[160] My translation from: Kedar Sakya, "Nepalma Viswo Baudha Sammelan: Etihasika Paksya**", Ananda Bhumi**, vol. 14, no. 7, 1986, p. 6.

[161] Heinz Bechert and Jens-uwe Hartmann, op. cit., p. 14.

[162] "Buddhist News: Baudha Sammelanko Samutghatan Sampanna", **Ananda Bhumi**, vol. 14, no. 8, 1986, pp. 30-34.

3.3. Establishment of All Nepal Bhikkhu Association

The development of any society needs one strong organization for the achievement of its aims. Modern Nepalese law has prohibited conversion to Buddhism since the beginning, and under the new constitution of 1990, public Dhamma teaching remains illegal. Theravādins are only permitted to teach those who are Buddhist by birth. At the beginning of the revival movement of Theravāda Buddhism, due to there being only a few monks and monasteries, there was no need for a central organization to look after day-to-day activities. All the monks respected each other and seniority was according to their day of ordination. They practiced according to the tradition through which they were ordained. There was neither conflict nor discrimination. However, within two decades the number of Theravāda monks had greatly increased and there was need for one organization to coordinate the monks from different traditions. An organization was required to clarify the status of the different traditions and to verify their ordination linage. Seeing these needs, after the overthrow of the *Rānā* regime in 1951, Venerable *Amritānanda* founded Akhil Nepal Bhikkhu Mahasangha (ANBM) at Ananda Kuti Vihāra. Venerable *Amritānanda*, who had been educated in the Sri Lankan tradition, himself became the president of the organization. The senior monk by ordination is generally given the Sanghanayaka position, the highest post in the Sangha, but here the highest authority is held by the President of the Organization. This is a new centre of authority, different from the system followed by other Buddhist countries where the Sanghanayaka or Sangharaja holds the highest position and the greatest authority in the Sangha. In Thailand, for example, the Sangharaja, typically translated "Supreme Patriarch", holds the highest position and the power of decision resides with him. In Sri Lanka, the Mahanayaka is the senior monk and President of the Community. In any case, because of his dedication and contributions to the revival and development movement, all the members of the Sangha accepted Venerable *Amritānanda* as the President and leader of the Sangha for the development of Theravāda in Nepal. He thus became the Mahanayaka of Nepal. Venerable *Pragyānanda* Mahāsthavir, who held the most seniority and was a contemporary of Venerable *Amritānanda*, was offered the title and position of Mahasanghanayaka of Nepal and thus became the first Mahasanghanayaka of Nepal.

After the establishment of the ANBM under the leadership of Venerable *Amritānanda* the Sangha grew rapidly. The Venerable Mahasanghanayaka was highly respected but authority was held by Venerable *Amritānanda*. Venerable *Amritānanda* attempted to impose uniformity on the Sangha community. Although he himself was not satisfied with the results, the monks today say that under his leadership there was unity in the Sangha. Nevertheless, some of the monks wished to be free of his authority and drifted away from his day-to-day supervision. Since he passed away in 1990, the community has become increasingly less unified. Venerable *Sudarshan*, the Abbot of Sri Kirti Vihāra attempted after Venerable *Amritānanda* to maintain some level of unity in the Sangha. However, he also did not succeed in maintaining unity. Mechanisms for resolving disputes were lacking and many monks wish to be free from the day-to-day control of the leaders of the Sangha. Nevertheless, the central organization more-or-less has the authority to deal with disputes among Sangha members and to manage Buddhist activities. The ANBM is still the central body overseeing the monks and nuns. The present Sanghanayaka is Venerable Subodhananda Mahāsthavir of Gana Mahavihara, Kathmandu, and the current President of the All Nepal Bhikkhu Association is Venerable *Kumar Kashyapa* Mahāsthavir of Ananda Kuti Vihāra, Kathmandu.

The Vinaya Pitaka, or "Basket of Discipline", contains the rules, ideals, and standards of behaviour that the Buddha formulated for those of his followers who went forth from home life to take up the quest for release with greater earnestness.[163] According to the Vinaya Pitaka, ordination in an outlying area, *paccanta janapada*, requires not less than five fully ordained monks, or *bhikkhus*; in a middle area, *majjima janapada*, not less than ten are required. Even though Buddhism had only just been revived, in Nepal, as a *majjima janapada*, ten *bhikkhus* were required to conduct ordinations. Most Nepalese monks were ordained abroad, in different Buddhist countries and in a variety of different *nikayas*, or traditions. They had been trained according to the *nikaya* in which they ordained. Once they returned to Nepal, they preferred to practice according to the tradition in which they ordained and did not wish to change. This situation has led to discrimination and sectarianism. In particular, Thai, Myanmar, and Sri Lankan traditions have been

[163] Thanissaro Bhikkhu, **The Buddhist Monastic Code**, (USA: Library of Congress Catalogue, 1994), p. 1.

introduced to Nepal. The members of the Sangha are aware of the situation but have not been able to find a resolution

The central Theravāda organization the Akhil Nepal Bhikshu Mahasangha, or All Nepal Bhikkhu Association (ANBM), consists of fifteen members of the Sangha. The status of the Sanghanayaka, or Head of the Sangha, is offered according to time in robes. The monk who ordained the earliest is eligible for this post, but he does not have much power over the Sangha. His role is to be present as a figurehead of the Sangha and to preside over religious activities. He does not have authority to command the members of the Sangha. According to Venerable Kumar kasayapa President of ANBM[164]

> The Sangha today lacks unity. During the time of Venerable *Amritānanda*, he united the Sangha and everyone was afraid of his voice. After him, Venerable *Sudarshan* Mahāsthavir handled the Sangha. Since they passed away, the Sangha has not been able to find such a figure who could lead the whole Sangha of Nepal.

He told to me that the reason for this problem was that the members of the Sangha were educated abroad. When they return they seem to have large egos and personal views. They became narrow minded.

Many senior monks and lay Buddhists complain of the ego and personal biases of new monks who trained abroad. A leading monk, Venerable Ashwaghosa Mahāsthavir,[165] told me, "They are trained abroad and well educated, but are egotistical and conceited. As a result, there is no unity." In his opinion, the monks who trained in Nepal are less egoistical and work for the development of Theravāda Buddhism. Venerable *Nyānapurnika*, Vice-president of ANBM suggests:

> For the development of Theravāda in Nepal, monks should understand their limitations in accordance with the Vinaya and keep to their practice. Monks should give priority to the Sangha over the individual.

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[164] Information from Ananda Kuti Vihāra, 28 November 2004.
[165] Information from Dyanakuti Vihāra, Banepa, 14 Mansir 2062 BS.

Most of the monks with whom I spoke seem to be seeking unity in the Sangha. They ask the members of the Sangha to be united and hope that the Sangha will be united soon. On other hand, lay devotees seem to be satisfied with ANBM's role in the development of Buddhism in Nepal. They only suggest the need for some modification and modernization in the Sangha. The Secretary of Dharmodaya Sabhā, *Anāgārikā Dhammāvati*, a leading person in the development of Theravāda Buddhism and in other Buddhist organizations, shares the common opinion that the ANBM plays an important and positive role in the establishment of Theravāda and the recognition of Buddhism in Nepal, but that it needs to be more flexible in terms of social modernisation and to understand the present situation and needs of society. When this issue was put to some of the members of the Sangha, their responses were often negative. They felt that some lay individuals and organisations wanted them to be more flexible in adapting to the modernization of society, while others criticised any adaptation; they felt that the laity was attempting to pull them in opposite directions. In any case, ANBM is the central organization for Theravāda monks. It is highly visible and highly respected. Every act and order from the Sangha is taken by them as the way of practice and the President and the Secretary of the Association play unique roles in leading the Sangha of Nepal.

The Executive Board of ANBM is composed of the fifteen most senior monks. The central office of ANBM was in Ananda Kuti Vihāra for many years, and Venerable *Amritānanda* held the position of President from its founding until his death. Soon afterwards, the ANBM moved its headquarters to its present premises at Vishwa Shanti Vihāra. Its address is:

Vishwa Shanti Vihāra, Minbhawan,

New Baneshwar, Kathmandu, NEPAL

P.O. Box 8973, NPC 327,

Tel. No.: 4482984, 4482250 (+Fax)

E-mail -vishwa@ntc.net.np

The structure of the ANBM is:

President	one
Vice-president	one

Secretary	one
Vice-secretary	one
Treasures	one
Members	15

Current ANBM office holders:

1. Bhikkhu *Kumar kashyapa* Mahāsthavir	President
2. Bhikkhu *Nyānapurnika* Mahāsthavir	Vice- president
3. Bhikkhu *Kondannya* Sthavir	Secretary
4. Bhikkhu *Bhaddiya* Sthavir	Vice-secretary
5. Bhikkhu *Bodhinyana* Sthavir	Treasury
6. Bhikkhu *Gunaghosha* Mahāsthavir	Member
7. Bhikkhu *Dhammasobhana* Mahāsthavir	”
8. Bhikkhu *Silabhadra* Mahāsthavir	”
9. Bhikkhu *Dhammapāla* Mahāsthavir	”
10. Bhikkhu *Sumedha* Mahāsthavir	”
11. Bhikkhu *Ananda* Sthavir	”
12. Bhikkhu *Sobhita* Sthavir	”
13. Bhikkhu *Susheel* sthavir	”
14. Bhikkhu *Sangharaksit* sthavir	”
15. Bhikkhu *Saddātissa* sthavir	”

3.3.1. The Monks' Order in Nepal

Venerable *Amritānanda* wrote that when he was young he had believed that the only Buddhist monks left in the world were in wall paintings. According to recorded history, after the social reformation by King Jayasthiti Malla, Buddhism experienced a steep decline. At the beginning of the 20th century, there was a reform movement for the revival of Buddhism throughout South Asia, for example in Sri Lanka and India. The reform movement did not exclude Nepal and in 1924 Venerable Mahapragya, a Hindu by birth, entered the monkhood with his colleagues in the Tibetan Buddhist tradition. It was during the rule of Prime Minister Chandra Samsher JBR, and the law strictly forbade

conversion and proselytization. Once they returned to Kathmandu Valley, Venerable Mahapragya was expelled from the country along with four other monks. Their exile was a turning point for Theravāda revivalism in Nepal. Venerable Mahapragya re-ordained in the Theravāda tradition under the guidance of Venerable U Chandramani Mahathera in Kusinagara, and thus was the first Nepalese Theravāda Buddhist monk in modern times. In due course, progress gave rise to the ordination and training of many Nepalese in the Theravāda tradition. In 1930, Venerable Karmasheel/*Pragyānanda* was the first Theravāda Buddhist monk to appear in the streets of Kathmandu, and the monks' order was initiated in Nepal. Venerable Mahapragya was the first Theravāda monk and Karmasheel was the first Theravāda monk to enter Kathmandu Valley for the propagation of Buddhism. His alms round on the streets of Kathmandu Valley were unique after five years in exile of the five *lama gelungs*. He was greatly successful in propagating Theravāda views among the Buddhists at Kindol Vihāra, the first centre of the Theravāda revival. The Venerable monks, Shākyānanda, *Dhammāloka*, *Amritānanda*, and Aniruddha, Subhodhānanda, Buddhaghosha all are ordained in the Theravāda tradition. Likewise, *Ratnapāli*, *Dharmapāli*, and *Sanghapāli* ordained as the foremost Buddhist nuns (*anāgārikās*) of Nepal. In 1943, Venerable *Dhammāloka* established Nepal's first Theravāda monastery, Ananda Kuti Vihāra, located at the Western side of Swayambhu hill.[166] This centre became the headquarters for the development of Theravāda Buddhism in Nepal. This is the place where Venerable *Amritānanda* one of the unparallel promoters of Buddhism, lived and established the All Nepal Bhikkhu Association and initiated Buddhist schools and Buddhist publications. Day by day, Newār communities became more interested and Newārs began to ordain in the Theravāda tradition. Initially practiced only by those of the Sakya and Vajracharya castes, Buddhism has now become common to all castes and races, a unique consequence of the introduction of Theravāda modern Nepal.

In the Theravāda tradition, the monks are responsible for the development and preservation of Buddhist doctrine. Therefore, not only for each new ordination, but also for every other lawful act of the Sangha (*vinayakamma*) laid down in Vinaya Pitaka and requiring the use of prescribed formulas (*kammavaca*), the participation of all monks within a

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[166] Bhikkhu Bodhigyan, **Buddhist literature in Nepal Bhāsā**, (Kathmandu: Dissertation of PGD in Buddhist Studies, Tribhuvan University, 2002), p. 30.

ceremonially delimited area (*sima*) is required. At the beginning of the revival, Nepal was classed as a *paccanta janapada* for Vinaya purposes, which meant that five monks were sufficient validly to give the higher ordination (*upasampada*). Currently, following the ruling of authoritative monks, to ensure that all acts of the Sangha are legally binding, care is taken that at least ten monks are present.[167] Therefore, the higher ordination has come to be respected as a holy religious act. The lower, *sāmanera*, ordination may be given by an individual monk but the All Nepal Bhikkhu Association must be informed.

At the beginning of the revival of the Theravāda tradition in Nepal, most of the ordinations were given by Venerable U Chandramani Mahathera of Myanmar. Consequently, they followed the Burmese Theravāda tradition. Some of them went for further study in Myanmar and later returned to Nepal. As a result the Theravāda tradition which is practiced in present-day Nepal is heavily influenced by Burmese Buddhism; the chanting, life-style, teaching Dhamma and so forth are in the Burmese style. However, there were some Nepalese who took their Buddhist education in Sri Lanka. These included Venerable Aniruddha Mahāsthavir, Venerable *Amritānanda* Mahāsthavir, Venerable Kumar Kashyapa Mahāsthavir, and Venerable Ashwaghosa. When Venerable *Amritānanda* returned from to Nepal in 1942 to Nepal and began to give public Dhamma talks, he was joined by monks from different traditions, especially the Burmese and some from India. Even though they had been trained in different traditions they were united by a single purpose: to revive Theravāda Buddhism in modern Nepal. It was truly a successful campaign. Many people became familiar with monks and they were respected by the society and there was an increasing demand for their teaching.

In 1944, after two years of the campaign, Prime Minister Juddha Samsher JBR summoned the monks and ordered them not to teach the Dhamma. The monks refused to comply and were ordered strictly to leave the country within three days. At that time, Venerable *Amritānanda* was already residing at Sāranāth in India. In exile, they travelled to different places in India. Following a meeting of the exiled monks, they established the first Buddhist society of Nepal, Dharmodaya Sabhā, with Venerable U Chandramani Mahathera as Chairman. In 1946 Venerable *Amritānanda*, as the General Secretary of Dharmodaya Sabhā, was able

[167] Heinz Bechert and Jens-Uwe Hartmann, op. cit., p. 20.

to bring a good will mission from Sri Lanka to Nepal. The mission was headed by the Most Venerable Nārada Mahathera. They were able to meet with Prime Minister Padma Samshera JBR, who gave permission for the exiled monks to return to Nepal as the Most Venerable Nārada Mahathera requested. Gradually all the monks returned. They were then able to teach and perform religious activities on the streets of Kathmandu Valley.

In 1951, Nepal experienced a profound change in system of government, the monks established an organization for the centralization of all the monks called "All Nepal Bhikkhu Association (ANBM)", and the tradition of supporting and training *sāmaneras*, *bhikkhus*, and *anāgārikās* in the *vihāras* was initiated. The original purpose of the ANBM was twofold; first, to resolve disputes over ritual practices that arose between monks ordained and trained in different traditions, and secondly, to deal with major disciplinary violations.[168] From the time of ANBM's founding Theravāda Buddhism rapidly developed, leading to a new generation of *bhikkhus* from different *vihāras* around the valley. After about six decades of Theravāda revival, many *vihāras* and centres have been built and there has been an increase in the numbers of both monks and nuns. Venerable *Pragyānanda*, Venerable *Dhammāloka*, Venerable *Amritānanda*, and Venerable *Sudarshan* were the leading figures in the revival and development of Theravāda Buddhism in Nepal. The leading figures among the monks today are Venerable Ashwaghosa, Venerable *Nyānapurnika*, and Venerable *Kumar Kāshyapa*. At present, Venerable Subodhananda of Gana Mahavihara is Sanghanayaka, the head of the Sangha, and Venerable *Kumar Kāshyapa* from Ananda Kuti is Chairman of the All Nepal Bhikkhu Association.

Most Nepalese monks received their ordination abroad. This means that they belong to various Theravāda traditions, or *nikayas*, misleadingly called "Buddhist sects". Almost all the important traditions of Theravāda Buddhism that are still practised in Sri Lanka, Myanmar, and Thailand can be found in Nepal. At the beginning the Amarapur Sri Dharmaraksita Nikaya figured most prominently in Nepal, because of Most Venerable Nārada Mahathera. This school has influenced Nepalese Buddhism for many years. Most Venerable Nārada, of this school, has lead Buddhist missionaries to Nepal for the revival and development of

[168] Sarah LeVine and David N. Gellner, **Rebuilding Buddhism; The Theravāda Movement in twentieth-century Nepal,** (Harvard University Press, Cambridge, UK, 2005), p. 146.

Theravāda from the beginning. He not only helped to revive Theravāda Buddhism but also lent support to Nepalese monks both *bhikkhus* and *sāmaneras* to study in Sri Lanka. In addition, after some years of visiting Sri Lanka the Nepalese took ordination in all the main Nikayas of Sri Lanka: Ramanna Nikaya, Syama Nikaya, and Amarapura Nikaya. In addition, there have been ordinations in all three main divisions of the Theravāda in Myanmar, the Suddhamma, Shwegyin, and Dwara Nikayas. The two main Thai groups, the Dhammayuttika, and Mahanikaya are represented as well. According to the customs of these groups, *vinayakammas* may be performed only within the same lineal traditions, that is, in the same Nikaya. They alone, according to custom, are competent to perform *vinayakammas* or acts of Buddhist ecclesiastical law. They alone are able to form a Sangha in the strict sense of the word.[169] The retention of this conception of the law could have had serious consequences for the Theravāda monks of Nepal, but no matter where they were ordained or which *nikaya* they belonged to, their main idea and aim was to re-introduce Theravāda Buddhism to Nepal. Therefore, they worked together for the propagation of Buddhism throughout the country. They succeeded to teach vast numbers of Nepalese and greatly to influence them. There is no discrimination between Nepalese monks based on lineage or ordination tradition. Their object is to revive and introduce Theravāda Buddhism, not the *nikayas*. The exclusivist concept of *nikaya* failed to develop in Nepal, and the Sangha of Nepal looks to the fulfilment of members for performing *vinayakamma* in accordance with the Vinaya Pitaka more than to the discrimination of *nikayas*. Since the reintroduction of Theravāda to Nepal, the monks have carried out a number of new ordinations in this "mixed" manner. However, people are social beings and monks are also social beings. Wherever people live together they try to investigate others' races and traditions, looking for their own race and tradition. The more those monks are educated in different cultures and traditions the more conflict there may be because of differences in behaviours, culture and tradition. Sangha members may not be aware of it but lay Buddhists see the differences in their habitual actions. In any case, as mentioned before, in the Theravāda tradition, ordinations and other *sanghakammas* must be performed within the boundary, *sima*, of a consecrated hall, or *uposatha*. Presently, there are six such *uposathagaras*, places in which ordinations may validly be performed. These are, Ananda Kuti Vihāra in Kathmandu, Sumangala Vihāra in Lalitpur, The International Meditation

[169] Heinz Bechert, op. cit., p. 21.

Centre in Sangkhamul, Nagar Mandap Sri Kirti Vihāra in Kirtipur, Vishwo Shanti Vihāra in Baneshwor and in Lumbini. Certain religious acts involving the Sangha, such as the *kathina* robes offering, may be performed in monasteries lacking the *sima*, but many acts, such as ordination, may not be performed except within a *sima*.

Nepal was influenced by Sri Lankan Buddhism for many decades. Therefore, following Sri Lankan custom, ordination was undertaken for life and the *sāmanera* did not intend to return to the worldly life, as do Hindu priests. When Nepalese monks returned from their study in the Thai tradition they initiated the system of temporary ordination. One of the remarkable incidents in Nepalese Buddhism was the visit of the Supreme Patriarch of Thailand, His Holiness Somdet Phra Nyanasamvara. His Holiness gave temporary ordination at Nagara Mandapa Sri Kirti Vihāra, Kirtipur. Since then temporary ordination has been practiced widely in Nepal, as other monasteries also have organized such functions on different occasions. Recently, Sukhi Hotu Nepal, a young Buddhist association organized weekly temporary *sāmanera* ordinations at N. M. Sri Kirti Vihāra, Kirtipur on the auspicious 77th birth anniversary celebration of Venerable Ashwaghosa and Kumar kashyapa Mahasthavir.[170]

For many centuries, Nepalese society has been entirely structured by the caste system. Consequently, Theravāda Buddhist monks come from different castes ranging from the highest to the lowest of Newār society. The first monks came mostly from the ranks of traditional Newer Buddhism.[171]

Early Buddhist monks and their birth Religion			
Caste	**Number**	**Newār Buddhist**	**Non-Buddhist (Hindu?)**
Vajracharya	2	√	
Sakya	8	√	
Uday	4	√	
Shrestha	1		√

[170] See Kondanya, **Sansamaran Bhikshu Kumar Kasyapa Mahāsthavir**, (Nepal Lipi Guthi Publications, 2004); Bhikkhu Sangharaksita, **Contribution of Bhikkhu Ashwaghosa Mahāsthavir to the Promotion of Buddhism in Nepal,** (Kathmandu:Spiritual Preaching Publications, 2004).

[171] Phra Vipassi, op. cit., p. 117-118.

Traditional Newār Buddhists took ordination into Theravāda at the beginning of the 20th century and subsequently played an essential role in the revival of Theravāda Buddhism in modern Nepal. The introduction of Theravāda Buddhism in Nepal led Buddhists to disregard the caste system to seek ordination regardless of caste. From this point on, the number of Theravāda Buddhist monks and nuns increased rapidly and within two decades of the first revival of Theravāda Buddhism there were a great many of them. However, after the entry into the Sangha of the different castes it seems that very few Newār Buddhists took ordination in Theravāda Buddhism. Presently, with over three hundred monks around the country, some studying abroad, very few traditional Newār Buddhists are taking ordination. (See Appendix II)

Venerable *Kumar Kāshyapa* expressed in a personal interview that the present Sangha lacks unity and needs a leading personality; without such a personality, he fears, the Sangha of Nepal will find it hard to survive for long. Since the deaths of Venerable *Amritānanda* and Venerable *Sudarshan* Mahāsthavir every member of the Sangha is aware of the situation but a suitable candidate has not yet been found to fill this function. *Anāgārikā* Anupama[172] a member of *Anāgārikā* Sangha and the Thai-Nepal foundation told me, "Monks need to learn more and to try and control their students. The present Sangha needs one training centre in Nepal to teach and preach to all the monks." Apparently many monks do not care much about the Vinaya, which articulates the core principles for Theravāda Buddhism. Venerable *Nyānapurnika*: "The Nepali Sangha is like a house with no leader. Theravāda monks depend on the rule of the Vinaya. If the Sangha members do not care much for the Vinaya rules that is a danger for future Theravāda monks." It seems that many monks are not even aware of the Vinaya rules. One well-known nun expressed that at present monks have less interest in Buddhist education than in other studies. In a same way, *Anāgārikā Dhammāvati* says, "English language is good but learning English language only is not enough for monks. They should learn Buddhism, practice in their daily lives and teach others. Presently, monks are teaching and preaching but they are empty on the inside. This will not work for the future."

The Secretary of Dharmodaya Sabhā hopes in this consumer age that the monks will be aware of the dangers and will not lean too much toward consumerism. Most of the lay devotees that I spoke with hope that

[172] Information from interviews at Dharmakirti Vihāra, 20 December 2005.

the monks will take seriously every decision that is taken by the ANBM. The laity complains that monks spend most of their time having lunch in devotees' houses and that very few maintain their interest in Buddhist study. However, it is one of the duties of monks to visit the devotees' houses at their invitation. Nepal is different from other Buddhist countries in that there are few monks and a large demand. So, every time a monk takes his midday meal at a devotee's home, he should give a Dhamma talk also. Monks may not reject the offering of the midday meal and other religious activities. On the other hand, due to lack of financial support, funding for institutes, and a proper Buddhist educational system, they are bound to perform religious activities and learn other subjects. People complain, say the monks, but they do not provide the support need to overcome the situation.

According to Venerable Buddhaghosa Masasthavir, in the past decades, it was hard to find monks in Nepal. If someone wanted to ordain they had to go to Kusinagara, India, but now there are many monks who ordained here in Nepal.[173] The status of monks is improving day-by-day *(see appendix I, II)*. The devotees also understand them. On the other hand, Venerable Ashwaghosa Mahāsthavir says that increasing the quantity of monks does not necessarily make sense for the development of Buddhism. Rather, monks should be qualified and well trained for the establishment and development of Theravāda Buddhism in Nepal. Supporting this suggestion Venerable *Kumar Kāshyapa* and Venerable *Nyānapurnika* have proposed a new school and a training centre for the new generation.[174]

3.3.2. The Nuns' Order in Nepal

Nepalese society is vastly influenced by Hindu culture and customs. Accordingly, men can easily get ordained or change religions, but women cannot do as they wish. In Hindu tradition, religious texts are only for male eyes. After marriage, women go to live in their husband's house and widows are not permitted to remarry. Remarriage is very rare and difficult, young widows would be likely to escape by eloping. Even though it is dangerous and carries a stigma, they may have no other options Divorce is similar. These restrictive customs are more common in

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[173] "Kasle ke Bhane Ekai Prasnama Anek Jawapha", **Dharma Pradeepa**, (Kathmandu: The, Sangharam Bhikkhu Traning Centre, 2538 BE), p. 48.

[174] Ibid.

the higher castes than in the others. According to *Anāgārikā Dhammāvati*,

> Women were under-control by custom and society. There was no education for women because they go to live in the husband's house after marriage. After marriage they are like a slave in the husband's home. It was a very hard life for women in Hindu Nepalese society.

In that oppressive society, they were introduced to the possibility of ordination in Theravāda Buddhism from the beginning of its revival. This was an option through they could hope for freedom of life and freedom from an oppressive society. In the early period the nuns were mostly from upper Buddhist caste families and had suffered from different aspects of social custom.

Since Kindol Vihāra became centeral point of the Theravāda revival movement, many people started to come for Dhamma talks. Dharm*āditya Dharmācārya's* compaign had already influenced to the newari society and people were pouring in to listen the Dhamma as payback of his hard works at *Kindol* Vihar. Later, venerable Kyangtse Lama from Tibet visited and taught Dhamma to the Nepalese in Kindol Vihāra. After his departure for Tibet, some groups started to meet together to study of Buddhism under the tutelage of a widow named Laxmi Nani Tuladhar. Pressure from the *Rānā* regime forced them to stop. The 1930 return of the first Theravāda missionary monk Venerable *Pragyānanda*, from Kusinagara, following his *sāmanera* ordination in the Theravāda tradition, began a decisive period for Nepalese society, especially the female community. He lived at Kindol Vihāra and taught the fundamentals of Theravāda Buddhism. His Dhamma talks succeeded in touching the devotees' hearts with unshakable faith and belief in Buddhism, instilling the desire to ordain. One result of those talks was that in 1930 three women left their homes and went with Venerable *Pragyānanda* to Kusinagara for ordination. They ordained with Venerable U Chandramani as preceptor. This was a great conversion for Nepalese women; breaking the social rules and religious customs was a turning point in the history of women in modern Nepal. Introducting of female ordination into Buddhism had to pay a great prise as Rānā government made this step as one of the reasons to deport monk out of country in 1944s. Theravādin monks had taken great risk and faced

different obstacles for female freedom and ordination into Theravāda Buddhism, which might not be forgotten by the Nepalese. i.e. Theravādin nuns of Nepal. As recorded in history, the *bhikkuni* lineage of Theravāda Buddhism had been broken, and it was therefore impossible for Venerable U Chandramani to ordain the three women as *bhikkhunis*. However, Myanmar does have the custom of ordaining women through a ten-precept vow and that option was open. Venerable Chandramani gave the three women the ten-precept ordination. They were upper caste women of the Nepal Uday family: Punnatara, Chanchhimi and Sanghatara. They became *Anāgārikā Ratnapāli*, *Anāgārikā Dharmapāli*, and *Anāgārikā Sanghapāli* respectively.[175] They were the first Nepalese women to take *anāgārikā* ordination. They were the first Theravāda nuns in modern Nepal. After them, other women followed their example and became nuns as well. Becoming a nun was often an avenue of escape from otherwise unavoidable suffering.

On their return to Kathmandu from *Kusinagara* in 1931, the first three *anāgārikās*, lacking any alternative settled in at Kindo Baha, a Vajrayāna monastery, which had recently been renovated by a group of Theravāda lay converts.[176] Other women, widows and abandoned wives who, like themselves, had taken refuge in the order from the *dukkha* of social marginalisation, joined them.[177] Some years later, in 1934, Laxmi Nani Tuladhar and five friends made their way to Kusinagara to seek ordination from Venerable U Chandramani. The Venerable monk found that they were not yet ready for ordination and sent them to Myanmar. After first hand experience of renunciant life in Arakan, Myanmar, they were ready to ordain in Buddhism.

The first ordained nuns are not as well known as some of the later ones, in particular *Anāgārikā* Dharmachari, the former Laxmi Nani mentioned above. Although she was not well educated she had a solid understanding of Buddhist doctrine and taught others as well. Her dedication is well known, and she was essential to the advance of Buddhist women in Nepal. She played an important role in the development of women's ordination at Kindol Vihāra. In 1944, when all the monks were exiled from the country for the offence of propagating

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[175] R. B. Vandya, **Sanghanayaka Agramahapandita Bhikshu Pragyananda Mahāsthavir,** (N.M. Sri Kirti Vihāra Publications, 1999), pp. 17-18.

[176] Sarah E. LeVine, **The Evolution of the Theravāda Nuns' Order of Nepal,** (Ph.D. Thesis presented to Harvard University, Cambridge: 2001).

[177] Ibid., p. 5.

Buddhism, the nuns were exiled as well but they were permitted to remain until the end of rainy season. *Anāgārikā Dhammacāri* was among them. She went to Trisuli, where she experienced a taste of freedom and decided to have own place. Soon after she returned to Kathmandu, she was able to purchase some land near Kimdol Vihāra with her own funds. Later, with the help of her devotees, she developed the site into Nepal's first women's convent. The convent is named Kimdol Vihāra like the old one in order to preserve the name.[178] Even though nuns are of lower status than monks in the Buddhist tradition, indeed, as *anāgārikās* there ordination was a non-canonical expedient, they did not escape State and social persecution. Many Nepalese Buddhists, both ordained and lay say that, the nun's status in Nepal is different from that in other Buddhist countries. They are well educated and venerate in Nepalese society. There is no status distinction between monk and nun by the laity.

According to the Buddhist Vinaya monks are a greater field of merit than are nuns, but in Nepal both are same to the people. The word *anāgārikā* means one who has renounced the household life, and in Nepal, it refers to women ordained in the Theravāda tradition. According to recorded history, the ordination of women in this way has been practiced in Myanmar since 2300 BE. They observe either eight or ten precepts.[179] Rather than referring to them as "*Anāgārikā*" the laity call them *Guruma*, or "Mother Teacher". They are as well respected in Nepal as are the monks.

After two decades of revival, Theravāda Buddhism had spread to all the castes of Nepalese society. Theravāda Buddhism is known for its rejection of the caste system, unlike other religious traditions, including Vajrayāna Buddhism. Although widows and divorced women continued to ordain as *anāgārikās*, by the end of two decades a few young women were beginning to ordain as well. Most of these were not from the upper castes. They had different reasons for seeking ordination, but two reasons were paramount. First was to escape from a forced marriage, the second reason was for the possibility of getting an education that was beyond the means of poor families. Parents in particular were unable to reconcile themselves to the idea that their daughters were making a life long commitment.

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178 Ibid., pp. 97-99.

179 Ratna Sundar Sakya, ***Anāgārikā Dhammāvati***, (Kathmandu: Dharmakirti Baudha Addyayen Gosti, 1992), pp. 16-17.

For three decades, until her death in 1978, *Anāgārikā Dhammacāri* was a charismatic leader of the Nepalese nuns. Another nun, *Anāgārikā Dhammāvati*[180] studied for 13 years in Myanmar before returning to Nepal to educate the post-*Rānā* generation in the Dhamma. *Anāgārikā Dhammāvati*'s birth name was Ganesh Kumari Sakya and she was from Lalitpur. She met Venerable Buddhagosha at Sumangala Vihāra who was giving daily Buddhist classes for the laity, including a few children. Ganesh Kumari had learned to read and write with a tutor at home; now she had the opportunity of reading selections from the scriptures both in Nepal Bhāsā and in *Pāli*. About a year later, Venerable Buddhagosha returned to Myanmar to resume his own training. Ganesh Kumari's father, meanwhile, had arranged a marriage for her. However, she evaded her father's attempts to intercept her and made her way to Kusinagara and Venerable U Chandramani's Vihāra, where she shaved her hair and set out with Venerable Dhammawuda[181] for Myanmar. Venerable Dhammawuda had come to Nepal with Venerable Aniruddha in March of 1950. At the request of the devotees he had remained for three months at Sumangala Vihāra. Before leaving Sumangala Vihāra he told to Ganesh Kumari along with her friends that if they were really interested in studying Buddhism, he could help them to be famous *anāgārikās* in Myanmar.

Ganesh Kumari went to Myanmar as Venerable Dhammawuda suggested with the help of her mother and her second older brother Mankaji on 16th May 1950. She left home with two friends, Manohardevi and Subhalaksmi.[182] They left the country with the help of Dyarikadasa of Bhimfedi who had helped the exiled monks in 1944. Ganesh Kumari and the others met Venerable Buddhaghosa and Venerable Dhammawuda at Kusinagara and ordained as *ānāgārikās* in November of 1950. Ganesh Kumari took the name *Dhammāvati*, Manohardevi became Magadhi, and Subhalakmi became Madhavi. *Anāgārikā* Magadhi and *Anāgārikā* Madhavi returned to Nepal with their relatives, as they wished, on 15 November. *Anāgārikā Dhammāvati* left India for Myanmar[183] with Venerable Dhammawuda with a caravan in 1951. She was the only Nepalese nun studying in Myanmar at the time. Later, *Anāgārikā* Ratna manjari, *Anāgārikā* Kamala, *Anāgārikā* Dhammadinna, and *Anāgārikā* Uppalavanna from Lalitpur joined her at Kemarana Nunnery. Nepal.

[180] Sarah E. LeVine, 2001, op. cit., p. 123ff.
[181] Ratna Sundar Sakya, ***Anāgārikā Dhammāvati***, op. cit., p. 7-10.
[182] Ibid., p. 12-13.
[183] Ibid., pp. 20-23.

Having completed her Dhamma studies, she returned to Nepal 2nd December 1962 with *Anāgārikā Do Gunawati*, a Burmese nun.[184]

Anāgārikā Dhammāvati overcame many difficulties and become well known for her hard work for the propagation of Buddhism in Nepal. Not only did she propagate Buddhism but she also promoted the freedom of women in modern Nepal. She succeeded in establishing the Dharmakirti Vihāra and the Dharmakirti Buddhist Study Centre. She is one of the most well known nuns in Nepal and a leader of the All Nepal Nun Association. Her dedication and work is accepted throughout the country and abroad. Especially, she has laboured for the betterment of Buddhist women in Nepal.

Anāgārikā Sujata told me in an interview that, "Nuns are more active than monks in the propagation and teaching of Buddhism to the Nepalese. Many nuns operate schools and Sunday schools around the country, especially in Kathmandu Valley."[185] She told me that she and *Anāgārikā Dhammāvati* ask the nuns to run the Saturday Schools. Due to their seniority and to the respect that the other nuns have for them, even the nuns who do not want to work in the programme. *Anāgārikā Dhammāvati* is a leading figure and exemplar for all the nuns. Through her influence, the order of nuns is more centralized and unified than is the order of monks.

Some Anāgārikās live in their own convents while some are housed in special sections of monasteries. There are many monasteries where monks and nuns live under one roof. This is not strictly in keeping with the time-honoured rule, and has occasioned criticism on the part of some lay adherents. Their tendency to live under the same roof is mostly to help monks and to facilitate other religion activities. However, the young nuns who came later, often very well educated and self-confident, did not accept this practice.[186] A number of them had studied abroad and Burmese influence predominates. Such places as the Dharmakirti Vihāra in Kathmandu became centres of Burmese influence through *Anāgārikā Dhammāvati*, who was educated in Myanmar and had the greatest success of all Theravāda preachers in Nepal. Dharmakirti Vihāra became the first

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[184] Ibid., p. 53.

[185] *Anāgārikā* Sujata, one of the leading teachers of Pariyatti Siksya and in charge of many Sunday schools around country. Information gathered 7th November 2005 at her home in Patan.

[186] Heinz Bechert, op. cit., p. 24.

nun's centre and convent under the control of nuns. Presently, there are many convents under control of nuns. 1994 through the efforts of *Anāgārikā* Sushila Guruma, the senior-most nun by ordination, the *Anāgārikā* Sangha was registered as a non-governmental organization. She herself was President of the organization and *Anāgārikā Dhammāvati* was Vice-president. Thus the *anāgārikā* organization has largely remained a proper organization. Most of the senior nuns trained in Myanmar and still most of the nuns are trained in Myanmar. Previously, very few nuns studied in Sri Lanka or Thailand, but presently there are some nuns studying in those countries and others. According to the Theravāda tradition the *bhikkhuni* ordination lineage was broken many hundreds of years ago and it is impossible now to ordain women. However, around two decades ago, Theravāda *bhikkhuni* ordinations were performed in the Shi Lai Temple of Los Angles, U.S.A., though the validity of those ordinations remains controversial. Nepalese nuns began to take *bhikkhuni* ordination in 1989.[187] Most of the leading nuns have taken *bhikkhuni* ordination in various Mahayana traditions. In 1991 *Anāgārikā* Pannawati and in 1996 *Anāgārikā* Indrawati and *Anāgārikā* Jayawati ordained as *bhikkhunis* in Taiwan. *Anāgārikā* Anoja, *Anāgārikā* Nyanawati, *Anāgārikā* Sujata, *Anāgārikā* Kusum, and *Anāgārikā* Viryavati ordained as *bhikkhunis* according in the Dharmaguptika Mahayana tradition in China in 1997. Furthermore, in 1998 an international full ordination ceremony was held where many Theravāda nuns from Nepal ordained as *bhikkhunis*. Even though they took *bhikkhuni* in various Mahayana traditions, they continue to practice the tradition of the Theravāda nun. The *bhikkhuni* ordinations have led to controversy and division among the leading monks of the Sangha. The *bhikkhuni* ordination of Theravādin nuns might have some benefits in present moments to some individual or organization, but not necessarily in the future as Theravada is solely traditional and orthodox line that has been passed by teacher to disciple since Buddha's time and introducing new aspects itself is dubious and disturbing as whether benefit or harm to the community or individuals of Buddhist of Nepal to come in future. Definitely in order to tell it who will gain or loose we will have to wait and see till time.

3.4. Theravāda Buddhist Temples / Centres

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[187] See Sarah E. Levine, 2001, op. cit., and Sarah E. Levine and David N. Gellner, 2005, op. cit.

It is important for a religion to have its own places of worship. Theravāda was at first taught in many different places, but an important part of the revival movement was the establishment of the *vihāras*. Although there are now many *vihāras* in Kathmandu and throughout the country, in the early years the movement faced many obstacles to founding them. In the beginning, the first monks lived in old Vajrayāna Buddhist monasteries. One of the central *vihāras* of the revival movement, Kindol Baha, had long been neglected and was in ramshackle condition. It was renovated as a monastery. Later, Venerable *Dhammāloka* founded the first Theravāda *vihāra* on the slopes of Swayambhu Hill, where Venerable *Dhammāloka* felt calm and peaceful. The *vihāra* was built and named Ananda Kuti Vihāra. Gradually, the *bhikkhus* established other *vihāras* in Kathmandu, Patan and elsewhere. These *vihāras* became centres for Theravāda activities and education. Due to their providing Buddhist education and religious activities, some of these *vihāras* became places of Buddhist study. These gradually developed as centres of Buddhist study and other activities. This could happen only after Theravāda Buddhism had gained a foothold in Nepal.[188] Presently, most of the *vihāras* are involved in main three fields, religious activities, Buddhist teaching, and social welfare.

Early every morning devotees come to the monastery for daily chanting (*buddhapuja*) and to offer *dāna* to the monks and nuns. They recite the recollection of the Buddha and take refuge in the Buddha, the Dhamma, and the Sangha, take *pancasila* (the five precepts), and chant. There is a short meditation after chanting. In some *vihāras* a resident monk or nun will also deliver a Dhamma talk. On the full-moon day each lunar month every *vihāra* offers *buddhapuja* and *paritta*. A shorter version of *buddhapuja* is offered early morning and evening of each day. Some *vihāras* conduct the full ceremony twice a month and some conduct it every eight days, on the four phases of the moon. The full-moon day, however, is the most important, and almost all *vihāras* conduct religious activities on that day. Every devotee comes to the *vihāra* bringing fruit, rice, flowers and other gifts, and waits for their *kalyanamittas*. While they are waiting they have a light breakfast and sing devotional songs (*gyanamala bhajan*), a unique feature of Theravāda Buddhism in Nepal. Once all the devotees have arrived, they form a line and pass trays of offerings, candles, incense, and flowers from hand to hand as offerings to

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[188] Ramesh Chandra Tewari, "Socio-Cultural Aspect of Theravāda Buddhism in Nepal", JIABS vol. 6 no. 2, p. 82.

the Buddha, Dhamma, and Sangha. As they pass the offerings to one another, they recite *buddhaguna, dhammaguna*, and *sanghaguna* until all the trays have been offered. The devotees then sit before the Sangha and recite the five precepts, *buddhapuja*, and listen to a Dhamma discourse. At the end of the discourse, the devotees offer *dāna*. The monks and nuns sit in a row and the devotees give them small sums of money, or rice and other materials. The discourses are mostly taken from Buddhavamsa or Jataka and *Dhammapada* commentary, which they elaborate in order to teach morality in contemporary society. During the months of *Gũñlā* and *vassavasa*, *buddhapuja* is conducted every day and monks give discourses. *Gũñlā Dharma*[189] is a complex of rituals, worship and ceremonies held for one full month, in the July-August time frame. The devotees have the opportunity of hearing discourses and stories teaching morality and merit-making. All the devotees are impressed by this new style of celebrating *g Gũñlā* and *vassavasa*, and the *bhikkhus* and nuns and their *vihāras* receiving liberal support, both moral and material, from the laity. Buddhist *vihāras* are used not only for religious activities but also for a variety of social activities. Let us look at some of the main activities that are conducted at the Buddhist *vihāras*.

3.4.1. Saturday Buddhist School

Buddhist education is a very important factor in the propagation and development of Theravāda Buddhism in Nepal. It plays an even greater role for Nepalese society especially in providing an education for Buddhist women in the society. In the Hindu tradition women are not permitted to read books. In Nepalese society women are required to live with their husbands after marriage. Parents, as a result, prefer not to send their daughters to school. Therefore, there were only very few women who had even a basic education. With the introduction of Buddhism to Nepalese society, the example of such nuns as *Anāgārikā* Dharmachari, who could read *Devanagari* script and teach Buddhist doctrine, raised the general awareness of the importance of women's literacy. Since the revival of Theravāda Buddhism in modern Nepal, women have had the freedom to choose the homeless life as *anāgārikās* and to acquire an education. But the Theravāda revival has given laywomen the opportunity of acquiring basic education as well. At most of the *vihāras*, the monks teach reading and writing to the lay devotees, and many women come to the *vihāras* to learn. Because of this many women are now able to read

[189] Ibid. p. 68.

and write. The instruction uses Buddhist books, so, these programs are beneficial both for the students and for Buddhism. Most of the nuns who pass the Kovid exam (Highest level of Buddhist study in Nepal) had their basic education from monks in the *vihāras*.

The classes at the *vihāras* developed into a structured system of Buddhist education known as Nepal Baudha Pariyatti Sikkhā. At first it developed into five classes and then ten classes. Classes are held early Saturday mornings. Many Buddhist children and non-Buddhists as well, take the courses. Monks and nuns give the classes, and classes are offered continuously in most of the *vihāras*. It will be discussed in detail in Chapter Four.

3.4.2. Meditation Centres in Nepal

Meditation is another factor that has influenced Nepalese society, especially the Buddhist communities of Kathmandu Valley. There are two kinds of meditation: *samatha* is calming meditation, visualization, and the like; *vipassana* is insight meditation, seeing things as they really are. It is believed that *samatha* meditation has been practiced in the Newār Buddhist tradition for many centuries through visualizing or internalising the ethical sensibilities of the Buddha and such Buddhist deities as the Newār traditional reveres. There are no records of *vipassana* meditation in Nepal before the beginning of the Theravāda revival movement. It is believed that Venerable Karmasheel/Pryagyananda, the first Theravāda missionary to Nepal, introduced *vipassana* meditation to Nepal.

> In 1940 (1997 BS), [Venerable Karmasheel] first introduced Buddhist meditation to the Nepalese at Kindol Vihāra. This was the first Buddhist meditation course for the Nepalese.[190]

It is also said that he conducted meditation retreats for devotees in various places, founding small residences for the meditators. Those residences eventually developed into *vihāras* and meditation centres, for example at Balambu, Matatirtha, and Bhot. His meditation teaching greatly influenced the Nepalese. The site at Balambu eventually became a

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[190] Ratnadevi Dhakwa, "Hanapamhma Dyanaguru Sanghamahanayaka Bhikshu Pryagyananda Mahathavir", **Pyragyananda Commemorative Volume,** (Sakyasingha Vihāra Publications, 1995), p. 126. (Translation by the author).

major temple, Pranidhi Purna Mahavihara. His influence on the people of Balambu can still be felt. Most of the people there know him by the name of Venerable Karmasheel and by his meditation teachings. His way of teaching influenced many lay people and encouraged them to ordain. Even today many senior monks continue to say that if the young people of Balambu stop ordaining, the number of monks and nuns will not increase in Nepal. A meditation master at the beginning of the revival of Theravāda Buddhism, Venerable Mahapragya was known as a *vipassanacarya*. His teachings were mostly concerned with meditation and reality. However, he left the monkhood to become a Buddhist ascetic (*bauddha risi*).

Later, meditation was not emphasized for some decades, until 1975, when it was revived at Gana Mahavihara under the guidance of Venerable Sumangala, who had practiced at the Mahasi Sayadaw Centre in Myanmar. Venerable Sumangala's meditation courses were designed to accommodate the interest of Westerners and others in *satipatthana* meditation. He also gave meditation courses to Nepalese and regularly invited monks from both within the country and abroad to give lectures. The courses continue today and are held for two hours every Tuesday and Friday at Gana Mahavihara. Thirty to 70 people regularly attend.[191] Meditation has gained in popularity among the Nepalese and the number of participants increases every day. Presently, there are two methods of *vipassana* meditation popular in Nepal, the method taught by Venerable Mahasi Sayadaw and that of S. N. Goenka.

A. International Buddhist Meditation Centre

Venerable Mahasi Sayadaw was a well-known meditation master and his style of meditation is known throughout the world. He had meditation centres throughout Myanmar, but due to Government restrictions, none outside the country. Even though most of the senior Nepalese monks went to Myanmar and had some meditation experience, few became deeply involved in the Mahasi course. The method was not systematically introduced to Nepal for some time. It was introduced outside Myanmar only in the 1950s, and to Nepal in 1982.

When Nepalese monks and nuns had taken *vipassana* courses at Mahasi Sayadaw Centre in Myanmar and learned the meditation method,

[191] Ria Kloppenborg, op. cit., p. 314.

some of them returned to Nepal and worked to promote Buddhism. They taught Buddhist meditation to the devotees. *Vipassana* was more attractively introduced to Nepalese society when the Myanmar nuns visited Nepal. In 1980 *Anāgārikā* Dow Pannachari and *Anāgārikā* Dow Sukhacari of Mawlamyin, *Anāgārikā Dhammāvati*'s acquaintances in Myanmar, visited Nepal. They gave the first meditation courses in Nepal. The courses started informally in the evenings at Dharmakirti Vihāra. A growing number of practitioners participated in the meditation, and the *anāgārikās* organized ten-day courses at different locations.[192] The following year, Venerable Master Mahasi Sayadaw was invited to Nepal to teach meditation. After his visit to Nepal, his meditation method was widely taught and practiced. Within a short period of the introduction of this method to the Valley, most of the *vihāras* offered instruction and regular hour-long meditation sessions. Later, with the help of Gyan Jyoti Kansakar, Venerable Sumangala raised funds for establishing a permanent meditation centre. In 1988, supported by international funds Dhyan Kendra, as the Nepalese call it, was constructed at Sankhamol with the name, International Buddhist Meditation Centre (IBMC). The director of this organization was a monk from Myanmar, Venerable U. Pandita. Monks and nuns who had been educated in Myanmar were members of the board. The first abbot was Venerable U Asabhācara, a disciple of Venerable U Pandita. Monks from Myanmar have headed the Centre from the beginning. They teach in the Burmese language and young Nepalese monks and nuns who have been to Myanmar translate into Newāri and Nepalese. A new thrust of the Centre is teaching meditation to teens, both ordained and lay. Meditation has become popular in Nepalese society. The Centre provides daily morning and evening meditation courses. There are also regularly scheduled ten-day courses for adults, school holiday courses, and three- and five-day courses for children over seven years. Both Buddhists and non-Buddhists send their children to the Centre, hoping that having taken the course they will become calm and will study well. One devotee told me that there was a great difference between the year when her child took the course and the year when he did not take the course.[193]

[192] Ma Gunavati, **Nepalaye 25 Dan Jigu Lumanti,** (Kathmandu: Dharmakirti publication, 1987), p. 29-30; Sarah LeVine and David N. Gellner, 2005, op. cit., p. 227.

[193] The parent of a practicenor at Balambu, Kathmandu Nepal, November 12, 2005.

There are many examples showing that the meditation courses help the children to become good citizens. They became examples to others. Daya Didi a well-known *pariyatti* teacher told me that

> At first the *pariyatti* students are not much interested in learning Buddhism, and not so interested in studying. Once they take a meditation course, they change completely, becoming interested in study and respecting each other.

She felt that we should encourage all the students to take these courses. Some of the young meditators report that after taking the course they are better able to control their emotions. They became calm and reasonable. Having experienced these results, they help anyone who wishes to take the courses.

B. Dharmashringha Vipassana Meditation Centre

According to Venerable *Nyānapurnika* most people both Buddhist and non-Buddhist is interested in attending meditation courses at Dharmashringha Vipassana Meditation Centre (DVMC) in Budhanilakantha where S. N. Goenka style meditation is taught. This is another option for Nepalese who wish to practice Buddhist meditation. S. N. Goenka visited Nepal and taught his method to the Nepalese in 1982. He was born in Myanmar and was a disciple of Venerable U Ba Khin a well-known meditation master in Myanmar. Goenka took his course in the 1950s. A few years later, he went to India to teach meditation and established a meditation centre at Igatpur, Gujarat, India. Coming from a non-Buddhist background, he presented *vipassana* as a technique that anyone of any religion could learn, practice, and use effectively. He introduced it as a natural way of life. In time the centre became known throughout the world as a *vipassana* meditation centre. In the early seventies, the first Nepalese merchants participated in his *vipassana* courses in India. They benefited by the courses and desired to share it with others in Nepal. They arranged Goenka's first two-week visit to Kathmandu in 1982.[194]

Goenka's first *vipassana* course in Nepal was given at Ananda Kuti Vihāra, Nepal's first Theravāda Monastery, with 250 participants.

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[194] Sarah LeVine, 2001, op. cit., p. 155.

His visit to Nepal was a great success. Many benefited and were affected by his Dhamma talks and many desired to attend more courses. Some continued to practice in group settings. After this inspiring event, the practitioners decided to start conducting ten-day *vipassana* courses and these were organized once a year at different places in Kathmandu Valley.

With the growing number participants, in 1987 Rup Jyoti Kansakar, with his brother Padma Jyoti Kansakar, established a *vipassana* centre, the Dharmashringa, or Summit of the Dhamma, for the benefit of many. The same year they invited Goenka to Nepal to open the centre. Rup Jyoti and his family continue fully to support these activities, and the headquarters are located in their home, Jyoti Bhavan. They supply every necessity to the centre. The Dharmashringa is on a beautiful site, overlooking the north of the Kathmandu Valley, which was donated by grateful meditators, at Buddhanilkantha, with the leadership of the Kansakar family. Initially, it had two acres of land and assistant teachers from India conducted the first courses. In time assistant teachers from Nepal were appointed.

After the establishment of this centre, it offered one ten day course every month for some few years, but due to the non-religious concept and the simple meditation technique many people were interested in taking course. Given the growing demand, through the dedicated service of experienced students, the frequency of the courses has doubled and ten-day courses are given twice a month throughout the year. Moreover, they initiated short-term three-day meditation courses for children on school holiday. Later, the Centre developed 30-day vipassana meditation courses with a separate section. For the last two years, the Centre has offered special courses for celibates in mid December.

Recently, in 2002, 17 Nepalese were appointed teachers, assistant teachers, and teachers of children's courses at the Dharmashringha meditation centre. They are:[195]

Monk Teacher:

1. Venerable Sraddhananda

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[195] **Vipassana Newsletter**, year 20, vol. 1, (Kathmandu: Nepal Vipassana Centre, 2060 BS), p. 4.

Assistant Teachers:

2. Mr. Dharma Man Newa 3. Mr. Sraddha Man Sakya
4. Mr. Bhimvar Singh Thapa 5. Mrs. Yashodhara Pradhan
6. Mrs. Laksmi Manandhar 7. Miss Chandra Devi Manandhar

Children's Teachers:

8. *Anāgārikā* Nyanavati 9. *Anāgārikā* Kusum
10. Mr. Triratna Sahi 11. Mr. Krisna Prasad Bhandari
12. Mrs. Sumitra Rajkarnikar 13. Mrs. Chandra Sakya
14. Miss Nita Kesari Shrestha 15. Miss Nanda maya Nakarmi
16. Miss Kanchana Lata Tamrakar 17. Miss Naina Chitrakar

The IBMC and DVMC provide meditation courses free of charge, but at the end of the course meditators make voluntary donations to the centre. At Dharmashringha, only sitting meditation is practiced, with *anapanasati*, or mindfulness of breathing in and out, as the basis for *vipassana*. On the first day, new students are instructed to observe the five precepts, and former students are instructed to observe the eight precepts. They are given other basic regulations to be observed during the course, such as the schedules, maintaining noble silence, not smoking, and not associating. For the first three days, meditators practice observation of breathing in and out with diligence and clarity. These three days are a little difficult for beginners because it is a technique for concentrating the mind while focusing on the nose. On the fourth day, *vipassana* proper is taught and the meditators are instructed sit for one hour with strong determination. The last seven days are devoted to the observation of sensation throughout the body. The observation goes from the top of head to the feet and from the feet back to the head. Every evening throughout the course Dhamma talks are given by Goenka, but there is no chanting.

At IBMC the meditators also observe the precepts but they also attend morning and evening Buddhist chanting. Not only sitting but also walking meditation is practiced. A half-hour or hour of sitting meditation is followed by walking meditation. The main instruction is to understand every movement and to understand everything as it actually is. This method is based on the rising and falling of the abdomen. This centre

maintains a thoroughly Buddhist way of teaching. Therefore, the participants are advised to conduct a moral life.

The meditators at DVMC include Buddhists and many non-Buddhists. IBMC is different in this because Buddhist monks teach there. As a result, very few non-Buddhists take the courses. At DVMC, the meditators follow the instructions given by S. N. Goenka in a series of his talks in Hindi and English. These have been translated into Newāri and Nepali. Goenka's technique can be practiced by everyone without discrimination of race, religion, country, caste, and so on. The meditators are not only from Nepal. Many from other Asian countries and Westerners also take courses at DVMC. Therefore, this centre is more attractive and famous. It plays an important role in turning the children to a moral way of life. *Anāgārikā* Sujata told me, "Due to his [Goenka] meditation courses, many Nepalese around the country who have done the courses, have stopped slaughtering animals in the name of God and have stopped taking intoxicants.'

She added that, most of those who take the DVMC courses are not Buddhist, but mainly Hindu, and that that might become a problem in the future. This opinion is strongly supported by *Anāgārikā Dhammāvati*. She told me:

> Many people who have done the course complain about the life-styles of the monks and nuns, and they lose respect for them. They lose faith in Buddhist renunciants and prefer not to take the Sangha as refuge, which is a part of Buddhism. Moreover, many do not participate in Buddhist activities.

Venerable Kondannya,[196] present Secretary of the All Nepal Bhikkhu Association said during his recent visit to Thailand,

> There is no doubt that the *vipassana* meditation instruction given by Goenka is becoming popular in Nepalese society. But the more popular it becomes the more the followers turn against the Buddhist monks and nuns. Some of them pay homage to the Buddha and Dhamma but they do not take the Sangha as refuge,

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[196] Interview at Wat Paknam on 9 January 2005 .

> which seems not correct at all, because the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha are the *Tiratna* one of the main factors of Buddhism.

In spite of these concerns, Venerable Kondannya himself practices the Goenka method and gives instructions in it in different places in Kathmandu Valley. Inquiring into this, it appears that some of the practitioners are not pleased with behaviour of the monks and nuns, and they complain that the monks and nuns do not meditate sufficiently. The monks and nuns however, are busy with social and religious work. Monks and nuns are few and the demands are many, so that they cannot meet all the demands on their time. Nevertheless, there are some Buddhist monks who have been appointed *vipassana* teachers and assistant teachers. Expressing their views on the differences between the two centres, *Anāgārikā Dhammāvati* and *Anāgārikā* Anupama say that the students of IBMC are friendlier and go to the *vihāras* and participate in Buddhist activities after having taken the course but that very few students of DVMC come to the Buddhist *vihāras*. Furthermore, DVMC students are mostly non-Buddhist. Whether they are Buddhist or not and whether they participate in Buddhist activities or not, the record shows that number of students are growing day-by-day. Many Buddhist *vihāras* also have opened group meditation courses for all interested.

3.5. Training Theravādin New Generation

With the revival of Theravāda Buddhism in Nepal the lay community rapidly expanded, but there were still few recruits to the order of monks. The political and religious situation made celibacy socially unacceptable. Buddhism was legally banned from time to time, and its religious point of view was unacceptable. When *pariyatti* education was introduced and textbooks began to be produced, young boys took *sāmanera* ordination and studied Buddhism. Day-by-day, the number of *sāmaneras* and *anāgārikās* increased but there was no institution for training them in Nepal. Therefore, almost all who ordained had to travel abroad for training. From the beginning of the revival movement, monks and nuns went abroad for study. Almost all the senior monks, who played significant roles in the revival of Theravāda in Nepal, were trained abroad, mainly in Myanmar and Sri Lanka. Newly ordained *sāmaneras* also trained in different Buddhist countries. Nuns had less opportunity to go to study outside the country. Without proper training, the increase in the quantity of monks and nuns was not helpful to the development of

Buddhism in Nepal. Given this fact, Venerable *Amritānanda*, founded a Buddhist high school for the sons of the laity in 1952. The school was named Ananda Kuti Vidyapeeth. In the beginning, it was run in the manner of the ancient *gurukul* in which the students do not pay for their education but they bring their own meals from home. Everyone who worked for the school in those days was a volunteer working without pay. Staff included the young energetic and dedicated resident monks of Ananda Kuti Vihāra: Venerable Mahanama, Venerable *Sudarshan*, Venerable *Kumar Kāshyapa*, and Venerable Ashwaghosa. The school was founded to educate Buddhists and to encourage ordination.

> Since the school was set up in a Buddhist monastery, and due to the involvement of Buddhist laymen and monks in managing and running the school, it inherited Buddhist characteristics. As a matter of fact, the school embarked on an educational policy based on Buddhist principle.[197]

The school was founded to educate the *sāmaneras* who lived in Kathmandu Valley. They read Buddhist texts and memorized Buddhist Suttas while they waited for arrangements to be made for them to study abroad. It was not easy for everyone who ordained to go abroad. Given this situation Venerable Ashwaghosa established a training centre in Kathmandu known as the Sangharama Bhikkhu Training Centre. Its purpose was to train Theravāda *sāmaneras* in preparation for sending them to Sri Lanka for further study.

In the early years, almost all the nuns went for study in Myanmar, as did the monks. There were no separate residences for them and for many decades the nuns lived in the same *vihāras* as the monks. In the early days, according to *Anāgārikā Dhammāvati* they could hardly have founded a convent like Dharmakirti for the nuns. Another factor in the arrangement is that in the beginning, the nuns helped monks and worked in the kitchen more than they engaged in other activities. When monks left Kindol Vihāra for Ananda Kuti Vihāra the nuns became free at Kindol Vihāra. However, there was still no provision for their training. Very few knew how to read at all and even fewer could read fluently. Nevertheless, most of nuns received a basic education and learned to read

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[197] "From the desk of the Principal: A Perspective History of Ananda Kuti Vidyapeeth", **Golden Jubilee Souvenir**, Jnan Kaji Shakya, ed., (Kathmandu: Ananda Kuti Vidyapeeth, 2002), p. 16.

and write at the Buddhist monasteries. *Anāgārikā* Chandrasila, who lives at Panidhi Purna Mahavihara at Balambu, told me,[198]

> All that I know today is from the Buddhist *vihāra*. I got my basic education from the *vihāra*, how to read and write; all learned from Buddhist textbooks. The monks were our teachers. If the monks had not taught we would have had no opportunity to know the letters.

Many nuns and laywomen tell similar stories. The introduction of Theravāda Buddhism shook the entire system of women's status in Nepalese society. Therefore, the new Theravāda generation has been trained in two ways: inside the country and in other Buddhist countries.

3.5.1. Theravādin Training inside the Country

Since the revival of Theravāda Buddhism most of the monks have studied abroad in a variety of Buddhist countries, for example, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, and Thailand. The first monks were dedicated to the development of Buddhism in Nepal and to increasing the number of monks. Some of the senior monks like Venerable Ashwaghosa and Venerable *Nyānapurnika* have said that while they were studying abroad, they hoped to establish training centres in Nepal like the ones in which they were trained. When they returned to Nepal they attempted to establish such centres. Venerable Ashaghosha discusses his thoughts in an article:

> In Nepal, the place where the Buddha was born, not only is it hard to find qualified monks; it is hard to find monks at all. I hoped to establish a *bhikkhu* training centre in Nepal like the Bhikkhusangha operates in other countries, in accordance with the rules and regulations of the Sangha.

Venerable Ashaghosha began the work of creating a training centre for monks. He was unable to do it alone. Understanding his intention of establishing a monks' training centre in Nepal, Dyarikadas Shrestha donated a plot of land with a house at Dhalko, near the

[198] Interview with *Anāgārikā* Chandrasila at Pranidhi Purna Mahavihara in Balambu, November 12, 2005.

Bisnumati River.[199] The centre was founded by a group of four people lead by Venerable Ashwaghosa. The other three were Bhikkhu Maitre, Dyarikadas Shrestha, who donated land, and Ratnamaya Sakya who provided financial support.[200] Venerable Ashwaghosa had asked Bhikkhu Maitre a Nepalese monk who was studying and working in Sri Lanka to help establish a monks' training centre at Dhalko, Kathmandu. Bhikkhu Maitre accepted and returned to Nepal in order to help with the project. Venerable Ashwaghosa is the founder and Venerable Maitree the co-founder of the Sangharam Bhikkhu Training Centre.

The Sangharam Bhikkhu Training Centre was Nepal's first Buddhist monks' training centre in many centuries. The Centre was established 28 November 1981, and the first ordination ceremony was held under the chairmanship of Venerable *Pragyānanda* and Venerable *Amritānanda*. In this first ordination ceremony, ten boys from Patan and Balambu were ordained as *sāmanera*. They were the first class at the Sangharama Bhikkhu Training Centre. They were:[201]

First Class of *sāmaneras* at the Sangharam Bhikkhu Training Centre			
No.	**Name**	**Surname**	**Home**
1.	*Sāmanera* Bhaddhiya	Maharjan	Balambu
2.	*Sāmanera* Upatissa	Shrestha	Balambu
3.	*Sāmanera* Ananda	Nakarmi	Balambu
4.	*Sāmanera* Saddhatissa	Shrestha	Balambu
5.	*Sāmanera* Mangala	Maharjan	Balambu
6.	*Sāmanera* Vinit	Maharjan	Patan
7.	*Sāmanera* Kolit	Sakya	Patan
8.	*Sāmanera* Kondannya	Sakya	Patan
9.	*Sāmanera* Dhammika	Sakya	Patan
10.	*Sāmanera* Sobhita	Maharjan	Patan

The project was free of charge. All the novices went on alms-round and depended on the devotee's donations. In the beginning, the project went according to the schedule without difficulties. The students were taught only Buddhist subjects, for example, *Pāli*, Buddhist history,

[199] Bhikkhu Ashwaghosa, "Sangharamaka Tita mitha Anubhavaharu", **The Sangharam**, special baisakha issue, (Kathmandu: The Sangharam Publication, 1998), p. 2.

[200] Bhikkhu Ashwaghosa, "Sangharamako Jiwani", **The Sangharam** (Kathmandu : The Sangharam Publication, 2003), p. 1.

[201] Bhikkhu Sangharaksita, op. cit., p. 35.

and Buddhist philosophy. Many monks, nuns, and lay devotees gladly supported the centre. However, for to some reason, all ten *sāmaneras* moved to Dyankuti Vihāra at Banpa. Venerable Ashwaghosa encountered many problems in running the project but he did not give up. Eventually, he sent, nine *sāmaneras* to Sri Lanka and one, *Sāmanera* Mangala, to Thailand for further study.

After that class had gone abroad, Venerable Ashwaghosa, ordained another ten *sāmaneras,* but this group requested permission to study in regular school in addition to studying Buddhism in the monastery. They were registered at Gitamata Secondary School near the centre. But instead of learning both side-by-sides they neglected learning Buddhism and became hard to control. In the end only Kondannya and Assaji remained and others disrobed. With that, Nepal's first monks' training centre closed. Even though the Centre closed, Venerable Ashwaghosa continued to ordain devotees, but with out the ambitious objectives of the Centre.[202]According the Venerable Ashwaghosa, there were two reasons for its lack of success:[203]

1. Different views between the founders; and
2. Attachment and selfishness of the *sāmaneras* towards global education.

Nevertheless, his hopes did not completely fail. Most of the students of the first class who trained at the centre were sent for training to Sri Lanka, returned to Nepal, and contributed significantly to the promotion of Buddhism. Looking at it in this way, his hopes of creating missionary monks to promote Buddhism succeeded. "They trained and studied abroad and returned for the development of Buddhism in Nepal. This is to my satisfaction," Venerable Ashwaghosa told me.[204] Among them, is Venerable Bhaddhiya,[205] now a well-known Buddhist teacher in Nepal. Presently, he is Abbot of Yampi Vihāra Lalitpur, Assistant of the Buddhist Education Examination Control Committee, Sub-secretary of the ANBM and a teacher at Vishwa Shanti Vihāra.

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[202] Bhikkhu Ashwaghosa, "Sangharamaka Tita mitha Anubhavaharu", 1998, op.cit., p. 4-5.

[203] Bhikkhu Ashwaghosa, **Sangharamako Jiwani,** 2003, op. cit., p. 1.

[204] Interview with Bhikkhu Ashwaghosa at Dyanakuti Vihāra, Banepa, November 28, 2005.

[205] Interview with Bhikkhu Bhaddhiya on 5th November 2005.

Other members of that class, who returned from training in Sri Lanka include Venerable Ananda.[206] After completion of the Master's degree at the Buddhist and *Pāli* University of Sri Lanka and Royal Pandit, he became a lecturer at Tribhuvan University, gives Dhamma talks on television every Friday, and writes critical articles on political, social, and religious topics for several different publications, including newspapers and magazines. Venerable Kolit[207] gained the Master's degree and Venerable Saddhatissa[208] the Bachelor's degree from Sri Lanka, and both are now helping with the development of *pariyatti* education at Sangharam and the project to build a new centre for Buddhist education in Tokha about 20 kilometres from Kathmandu and to provide scholarships to poor students from around the country. Another returnee from that class is Venerable Sobhita,[209] a well-known Dhamma preacher in Newāri, Nepali, and English who also organizes the *mahaparitta* ceremonies and is a main Dhamma preacher at Gana Mahavihara. One year ago, on 2004 (Asad 25, 2061 BS), under the leadership of another alumni of that class, Venerable Sobhita, the Dharma Vijaya Padanama Buddhist Organization was established at Gana Mahavihara. The Organization was re-organized on 2005 (Asbin 22, 2062 BS).[210] Recently, Venerable Rahula,[211] the most senior alumni of the Sangharama Bhikkhu Training Centre, who received the Master's degree in 1994 from the Buddhist and *Pāli* University of Sri Lanka, and lectured at Vidyodaya Pirivena, Maligokanda Kolombo for many years, returned to Nepal and is living in Dhyankuti Vihāra, Banepa. Presently, he is Treasurer and in charge of the Metta Centre, a girls orphanage in Banepa.

Venerable Mangala,[212] who went to Thailand, completed his Bachelor's degree at Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University in Thailand, and his Master's at the Buddhist and *Pāli* University of Sri Lanka. He has been lecturing in *Pāli* and Sanskrit studies in Taiwan for many years. He is planning to establish a Buddhist boarding school in

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[206] Interview with Bhikkhu Ananda on 10 November 2005 at Sri Kirti Vihāra; Sangharaksita, op. cit., p. 73.

[207] Information from Bhikkhu Kolita on 18th Nov 2005; Sangharaksita, op. cit., p. 75

[208] Information from Bhikkhu Saddhatissa on 18th Nov 2005; Sangharaksita op. cit., p. 73.

[209] Sangharaksita, op. cit., p. 75.

[210] Secretarial Report, "Report of Annual Meeting", **The Subhashita, A Buddhist Monthly**, vol. 2, no. 2, Dharma Vijaya Padanama publication, 2005.

[211] Information from Bhikkhu Rahula on 2nd December 2005 at Dyanakuti, Banepa.

[212] Information from Bhikkhu Mangala on 22nd December 2005 at Wat Mahadhatu, Bangkok.

Nepal. Venerable Upatissa,[213] after completion of the Masters degree in Sri Lanka, is living Australia as a *dhammaduta* and writing articles and books in Nepali and English. Venerable Vinit[214] is studying for the Master of Philosophy degree at the Buddhist and *Pāli* University in Sri Lanka, where he already completed the Master of Arts degree. He is a member of Nepal Bhikkhu Association of Sri Lanka and gives Dhamma talks in Nepal Bhāsā through Radio Sri Lanka. He returns to Nepal once a year. This year he came after the cremation of the Nepalese nun *Anāgārikā* Dhammesi, who had been studying in Sri Lanka[215] to perform religious activities with her family and for the publication of her memorial.

Even though these alumni of the school are working to promote Buddhism in different fields, Venerable Ashwaghosa seems dissatisfied with their behaviour. He feels that are very weak in the Vinaya rules and more concerned with their personal success than with benefiting Buddhism. Because of their ego and selfishness they have not covered as much ground as would be expected given their qualifications. Ashwaghosa he believes that there must be quality monks rather than a large quantity of monks in Nepal. Many other Buddhists, both ordained and lay share this feeling.[216] Venerable Nyanapurnina has suggested that,

> Most of the monks do not care about the Vinaya rules. If monks continue doing as they are doing presently, that will be dangerous for the future of Theravāda Buddhism. It is not only a danger for Buddhism but a danger to the concept of the robe as well.

Both internal and external problems contributed to the failure of the Sangharama Bhikkhu Training Centre. In any case, many active young monks are alumni of the Centre. Another centre has been opened at New Baneshore, Kathmandu by Venerable *Nyānapurnika*, known as Vishwa Shanti Vihāra, The World Peace Temple. It is reported that Venerable *Nyānapurnika* was asked, "five decades into the revival of

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[213] Sangharaksita, op. cit., p. 73.

[214] Infromation from Bhikkhu Vinit on 28 November 2005 at Kumari Pati, Lalitpur.

[215] *Anāgārikā* Dhammesi was born in 2024 BS marga 20 at Nagao, near Kirtipur and ordained as a Buddhist nun at IBMC at Sankhamol 16 years ago. She went to Sri Lanka for further study about seven years ago. She was suffering heart disease and later cancer. After having treatment in a Sri Lankan government hospital she died on 19 Ashbin 2062BS in hospital in Sri Lanka. Venerable Vinit on be half of the Nepal Bhikkhu Association of Sri Lanka cared for her until her last breath.

[216] Information from with Bhikkhu Ashwaghosa at Dhyankuti Vihāra.

Theravāda Buddhism in Nepal there is no increase in the quality and quantity of monks: what should we do for the development of Buddhism?" Venerable *Nyānapurnika* answered that the situation would not improve until there was a Buddhist institute like Pirivena of Sri Lanka in Nepal.[217] With that in mind he founded the new centre in 1984.

The World Peace Temple, or Vishwa Shanti Vihāra, is a Theravāda Buddhist monastery founded in 1984 (2041 BS). The land was donated by Chaityamaya Sakya, now *Anāgārikā* Chandanyani, on the auspicious occasion of the 64th birth anniversary of Venerable Buddhaghosa. Venerable *Nyānapurnika* was the Abbot the Vihāra. Later, with the support of Malaysian, Singaporean, and Nepalese devotees, it developed into a Buddhist school around 1989 (2046 BS) and was inaugurated by the Burmese monk Venerable U Shasanabhivamsa in 1997 (2054 BS). Realizing the importance of Buddhist education, culture, and literature for the moral life of human beings, Vishwa Shanti Vihāra opened a school called Vishwa Shanti Bauddha Shikshalaya (World Peace Buddhist School) as an educational arm of the Vihāra. Presently, the Vihāra is not only a training centre but also is headquarters of ANBM and the Pariyatti Education Centre. On 13th February 1997, it was affiliated with Bhanu Madhyamik Vidyalaya or Durbar High School, under the able guidance and management of Venerable *Nyānapurnika*, in order to achieve the noble goal of producing learned and capable monks and nuns, expert in secular subjects as well as in Buddhist teachings (*pariyatti shiksya*), and capable of propagating and popularising Buddhism in Nepal.[218] It is not a Buddhist school but a school operated by monks at the Buddhist temple. All the students are *sāmaneras* or *anāgārikās* and are from different *vihāras* in Kathmandu Valley. The School is free of charge. This is the only school for Buddhists in the country and most of the students live at Vishwa Shanti Vihāra. "Presently, this centre is known as the centre for producing Buddhist monks for Nepal."[219]

The School opened with 15 students in 1996 (2053 BS). At first five students were in class five and ten students were in class six. Every

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[217] "Kasle ke Bhane Ekai Prasnama Anek Jawapha", **The Dharma Pradeepa**, (Kathmandu: The, Sangharam Bhikkhu Traning Centre, 2538 BE), p. 48.

[218] "A Critical Review 2062 Vishwa Shanti Baudha Shikshalaya", **The Shanti Sandesh**, Vishwa Shanti Bauddha Shikshalaya Souvenir, 2549 BE, pp. 121ff.

[219] Suwanrna Sakya, "Nepalama Bauddhasikkya", **The Shanti Sandesh**, Vishwa Shanti Bauddha Shikshalaya Souvenir, 2549 BE, pp. 42-44.

year, new students came and others disrobed due to the Vinaya rules. Presently, there are 35 *sāmaneras* and one *anāgārikā*, altogether 36 students. there are 17 full- and part-time time teachers. Since last year, the School has been accepting *sāmaneras* and *anāgārikās* from other *vihāras* and there is one *sāmanera* from Ananda Kuti Vihāra, four *sāmaneras* from Buddha Vihāra, and one from Sri Kirti Vihāra Kirtipur attending classes. Students are selected strictly on the basis of an entrance examination and an information form.[220]

Students at Vishwa Shanti Vihāra		
Students	**Class**	**Remarks**
8	6	Some students are from other *vihāras* in Kathmandu Valley
6	7	
9	8	
6	9	
7	10	

This year, 2005 (2062 BS), two students passed the School Leaving Certificate (SLC), the highest level examination of the School. In the past, students who passed the SLC examination have been sent to study in Myanmar, Sri Lanka, and Thailand.[221] One of the graduates of the School, Venerable Vajirabuddhi, is currently living in Taiwan and supports a monthly lunch at the School. Most of the graduates are sent to Myanmar and there are currently six graduates studying in Myanmar. They are: *Sāmaneras* Acharo, Amato, Jutima, Kovindo, Buddhapiyo, and *Anāgārikā* Buddhapali. Venerable Khemik, a graduate of the School, is living in Thailand working on his Bachelor's degree at Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University. *Sāmanera* Nyaninda and *Anāgārikā* Upananda are studying in Sri Lanka. Some students who passed the SLC examination are now living in different *vihāras* in Nepal, assisting with the day-to-day activities of the *vihāra*. According to the annual report of Vishwa Shanti Vihāra, there are nearly 60 residents of the Vihāra, eight *bhikkhus*, 41 *sāmaneras*, six *anāgārikās*, and three lay devotees.

All the students who are living at Vishwa Shanti Vihāra are required to follow the rules and regulations of the temple. Living as

[220] "A Critical Review 2062 Vishwa Shanti Baudha Shikshalaya**", The Shanti Sandesh**, 2549 BE, op.cit. pp. 121ff.

[221] Information from Venerable Bodhinyana, General Secretary, Vishwa Shanti Vihāra and School and my own four days of observation at the centre.

hostel students they do their work themselves and perform daily activities according to the timetable. There are slight changes in the daily schedule on Saturday and no school classes. Every morning cleaning assignments are given to the students in place of mandatory exercise, and they practice walking meditation with the monks.

Daily schedule for resident students[222]

Morning		Afternoon and evening	
Time	**Subject**	**Time**	**Subject:**
4:00	Wake up bell	12:00	Rest
4:15	Personal hygiene	12:45-3:30	Classes
4:45	Buddhapuja and meditation	3:30	Rest and study
6:00	Breakfast	4:00	Sanitation or cleaning
6:45	Chanting	4:30	Refreshments
7:00	Classes start	5:00	Chanting and meditation
11:00	Lunch	6:15	Dhamma talk practice for all students
		6:30	Refreshment
		7:00	Study and doing homework
		9:00	Rest time

Since the School opened there have been many remarkable activities besides the daily schedule. *Sāmanera* Nemindo, an eighth-class student has given the following summary of the routine at the School.[223]

1. Daily: Vishwa Shanti Vihāra is a Buddhist temple and all the students are ordained. Since we are ordained in Buddhism, one of our important duties is to worship or pray, chanting every morning and evening. Therefore, Vishwa Shanti Vihāra has daily *buddhapuja*, chanting sessions and short meditation periods for all. After evening meditation the *sāmaneras* are assigned to give Dhamma talks, in order to teach them how to give Dhamma talks to the lay devotees. Besides that they have to clean the monastery. Every student strictly maintains Buddhist discipline as required of *sāmaneras* and *anāgārikās*, performing all their *vihāra* duties and obligations.

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222 Samanero Nemindo, "Activities of Vishwa Shanti Vihāra", **The Shanti Sandesh**, Vishwa Shanti Bauddha Shikshalaya Souvenir, 2549 BE, pp. 150-151.

223 Ibid., 150-151; Amita Dhakhwa, "Vishwa Shanti Viharko Dharmik Sewa: Eka Report", **The Shanti Sandesh**, Vishwa Shanti Bauddha Shikshalaya Souvenir 2549, pp. 29-30.

2. Weekly: School is closed on the weekends and there is a special schedule for the students. Up to an hour and a half of extra meditation will be practiced. *Pariyatti*, or Saturday Buddhist education, is given to all so as to prepare them for the highest-level *Saddhama Palaka* or *Kovida*. Venerable *Nyānapurnika* or Venerable Bodhinyana give a Buddhist discourse before lunch and lay devotees also participate in this programme. In addition Venerable Nigrodha and other *sāmaneras* go to give Buddhist education (*pariyatti*) in different centres and visit lay devotees houses for the midday meal.

3. Monthly: *Purnima* or the full-moon day of every month is an important religious day in Nepal. All the Nepalese perform religious activities on this day. In keeping with this, Vishwa Shanti Vihāra provides long *buddhapuja* and meditation sessions. Both ordained and lay Buddhists attend this monthly programme. Venerable *Nyānapurnika* gives precepts and basic instruction to the *sāmaneras* and *anāgārikās* in the evening on every full-moon day. On the full-moon day the monks also go on alms-round in different streets and villages. Additionally, on the third Saturday of every month there is special *buddhapuja*.

4. Yearly: Every year the Vihāra celebrates its anniversary and the *kathina* ceremony. On the same day, the Management Committee celebrates Venerable *Nyānapurnika*'s birthday and issues **The Shanti Sandesh** a Buddhist magazine with articles of the students and activities of the School. Besides this, for Dashain, a Hindu festival, a ten-day mediation retreat is conducted for *sāmaneras* and *anāgārikās*. They have meditation retreats at meditation centres, either in DVMC or IBMC.[224] Venerable *Nyānapurnika* goes abroad once a year, especially to Singapore and Malaysia, in order to seek financial support for the School. Every year, many Singaporeans and Malaysians visit the monastery as supporters, and some people from Myanmar also visit. The main financial support is from abroad, especially from Singapore and Malaysia.

5. Special occasions and educational tours: Every year, there are many educational tours inside and outside of Kathmandu Valley. The students are encouraged to participate in different activities. They participate in different competitions such as in the arts, essay writing, quiz contest, Dhamma debate, speech, and drawing.

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[224] Amita Dhakhwa, op. cit. pp. 29-30; "A Critical Review 2062 Vishwa Shanti Baudha Shikshalaya**", The Shanti Sandesh**, op.cit., pp. 121ff.

Free health check-ups are provided for the students on different occasions throughout the year. The health-check services are provided by Dr. Bijayalal Shrestha, Dr. Keshari Vajracharya and Dr. Chandresh Ratna Tuladhar.

On different occasions temporary ordinations are held at the temple, in order to support the School, the continuation of the task of Buddhist education, and other religious activities. Every year new students are admitted from different regions of the country. Mostly, this ceremony is held on the auspicious Vesak Day, or *Baishaka*, every year. This year, there were 12 temporary ordinations. Besides this, the School organizes welcome ceremonies for Buddhist delegations and guests from abroad, especially from Malaysia, Thailand, and Myanmar.

After passing the SLC examination the students are free to study according to their own interests. Most of them go to a campus and undertake higher studies. They go to study in colleges near the monastery and contribute by teaching the junior students at the School. They teach Dhamma classes to the junior students, supervise their study hour in the evening, and participate in other activities of the Vihāra. Presently, there are two *anāgārikās* are studying Humanities at Panchakannya or PK Campus, and five *sāmaneras* are also studying Humanities on different campuses. All of them help to teach at the School. The School provides scholarships for those students who pass the distinction (board) in Buddhist education. Some scholarships are offered other students as well.

There is a special English language class for the improvement of the students' English. There are two volunteer teachers from abroad, Mr. John Gem Brashwood and Miss Christein from the United States. When I visited the school, Miss Christein had been there for two months (since November, 2005). In her experience all the students seemed eager to learn English and their English skills were getting better. However, she says that she has little time to teach. Nevertheless, she enjoys teaching.

The Annual Report gives a summary of activities related to the School. Some students have gone to Myanmar, Thailand, or Sri Lanka for further study. Both *bhikkhus* and *sāmaneras* give Dhamma talks in and outside the School on different occasions. According to Venerable Nigrodha, a resident monk of the School told me that the basic curriculum engaged the students for at least two years in Dhamma,

Vinaya, *Pāli*, Sanskrit and Social Studies. Following completion of that curriculum the students are channelled into higher level studies up through the Master's degree, for example in Sociology, Philosophy, Psychology.

There are some monks, nuns, and lay devotees who complain that Vishwa Shanti Bauddha Shikshalaya is not a Buddhist school because they only teach the State mandated curriculum during the week and teach Buddhism only on Saturday. There is a Dhamma course after the SLC examination but most students do not take this two-year course. The students tend either to visit abroad or to disrobe after the passing the SLC. Buddhism is not part of the regular curriculum during the week. There are some Buddhist subjects offered on an optional basis but the students seem not to be very interested in this subject. Many monks and nuns talk about opening Buddhist schools but there are very few who help the School by giving lectures or other support. There is limited outside support according to Venerable Bodhigyana and Venerable Nigrodha, supervisors at the School. They are also willing to affiliate with any Buddhist university of the world in order to benefit the School. That would be a positive development for moulding the new generations and for the betterment of the School, which, in turn, would be a strong point in the development of the new generation into good citizens and qualified messengers of Buddhism to the world.

Some to say that there is no difference between the Triple Gem Boarding School and other schools founded by nuns and monks. The Triple Gem Boarding School, founded by Venerable Kondannya in 2000, provides primary education to the sixth level. In 2005 it had 350 students and 16 teachers with an administrative staff of three. There are three Buddhist subjects, the story of the Buddha, the story of Prince Siddhartha, and Jataka stories as moral teaching. Before classes begin they recite basic Buddhist chants. Triple Gem, then, is similar to Vishwa Shanti in that both have morning chanting before classes and include some Buddhist subjects.[225] There are only two significant differences. At Vishwa Shanti all the students are ordained, while at Triple Gem they are lay; Vishwa Shanti is non-profit, while Triple Gem is for-profit. *Anāgārikā* Nyanasila, among others, maintains that such schools are not Buddhist schools, are only operated by Buddhist monks and nuns with a few Buddhist subjects. Because of this, many monks and nuns would like

[225] Information from the managament board.

for there to be a purely Buddhist institute like the Sangharama Bhikkhu Training Centre in Nepal. Some of them are trying to form such an institute but do not have a concrete plan, and seem only to be making castles in the air, rather than supporting an existing school like Vishwa Shanti Bauddha Shikshalaya

Because of the long-term influence of Sri Lankan Buddhism in the early years, there was no temporary ordination. Then some monks returned from Thailand after their ordinations there. Mass temporary ordinations were begun at Lumbini in 1978 and the practice came to be integrated into Nepalese Buddhist society. The most important occasions of such mass ordination were on April 23, 1985, when 105 persons were given *sāmanera* ordination on the auspicious day of 86th birth anniversary of the Sanghanayaka and in 1986 when 87 women took the eight precepts at Sri Kirti Vihāra on the occasion of 87th birth anniversary of the Sanghanayaka of Nepal. Among them, 60% continued their lives as *anāgārikās*. Subsequent to these, 95 persons were ordained in 1992 at the same place, on the occasion of the 93rd birth anniversary of the Sanghanayaka.[226] They were trained in the Theravāda tradition and most of them continue to support Theravāda Buddhist activities today. In 1985, 73 Sakya devotees were given ordination on a single occasion at Sri Kirti Vihāra, Kirtipur by H.H. Somdet Phra Nyanasamvara, the Supreme Patriarch of Thailand, during his official visit to Nepal.[227] Buddhist monks, nuns, and scholars trained them, and Somdet Phra Nyanasamvara himself gave instructions on some of the evenings. Again, in 1993 at Sakyasingha Vihāra 93 persons were given ordination.

Presently, mass temporary ordination is practiced among the Buddhists of Newār society. Almost all the *vihāras* conduct this ceremony on different occasions. Recently, Sukhi Hotu Nepal, a young Buddhist organization conducted a one-week mass temporary ordination at Sri Kirti Vihāra on the auspicious occasion of the 77th birth anniversary of Venerable Ashwaghosh and Venerable Kumarkashyapa Mahāsthavir. At Dharmakirti Vihāra such mass ordinations are held every school holiday, in order to impart Buddhist moral training. This is one of the Dharmakirti Vihāra's activities, and other *vihāras* also hold such functions on various occasions. Even though the ordinations and training

[226] R. B. Vandya, "Nepalay Buddhadhamaya Punarjagaranay Adhunik Pravarta Sanghamahanayaka Bhikshu Pragyanada Bahasthavir", **The Venerable Pragyananda Comemorative Volume**, Bhikkhu *Sudarshan*, ed., (Lalitpur: Sakyashingha vihāra, 1995), pp. 28ff.

[227] Ven. *Amritānanda*, op. cit., p. 18-22.

are short-term they have a significant influence on the daily life of the participants. Some re-ordained for life and others remain lay and become supporters of Buddhism.

3.5.2. Theravādin Training in Abroad

The majority of monks continue to go abroad for their training. As mentioned earlier, by law, Nepal is a Hindu country, and the propagation of Buddhism is banned. It is not possible to give the new generations a thorough knowledge and understanding of Buddhism inside the country. There is no institute or organization to educate them in Buddhist philosophy. Therefore, from the beginning of the Theravāda revival movement monks have trained abroad in such Buddhist countries as Sri Lanka, Myanmar, and Thailand.

Dharmāditya Dharmācārya, a student from Nepal initiated the movement for the revival of Theravāda Buddhism from Calcutta, India in 1923. In the same period, monks from different Buddhist countries were beginning to live in India. One of them was Venerable U Chandramani, from Myanmar. Venerable U Chandramani became the key figure in the ordination of Nepalese monks. Most of the first and second generation received ordination from him at Kusinagara. He supported them by giving accommodations at his own monastery and sending them to Myanmar for their religious education. He was also the teacher of all the first generation of Theravāda nuns of modern Nepal.[228] Venerable Mahapragya re-ordained as a Theravāda *sāmanera* in 1928, and thus became the first Nepalese to ordain in the Theravāda tradition in modern history. He learned Theravāda doctrine with Venerable U Chandramani. Shortly afterwards, Venerable Karmasheel/*Pragyānanda* ordained in Theravāda and after learning Theravāda doctrine from the master returned to Nepal as the first Theravāda missionary in modern history. Venerable Mahapragya studied in Myanmar, followed by Venerable Karmasheel, who went to Arakan, Myanmar and received the higher ordination there. They trained there for many years. In 1937, Venerable Mahapragya returned to Nepal and taught Dhamma in Bhojapura, East Nepal. After a few months he was imprisoned along with Venerable *Amritānanda* who had ordained with Venerable U Chandramani as

[228] Phra Vipassi, 2001, op. cit., p. 98.

preceptor in 1936. After a few weeks of imprisonment they were expelled from Nepal and went to India. Venerable *Amritānanda* continued to Myanmar and later to Vajiraramaya in Sri Lanka for further studies.

In 1944 *Rānā* Prime Minister Juddha Samsher exiled Venerable *Amritānanda* along with several other Theravāda monks. While in exile, those monks established one of the first Nepalese Buddhist organizations, the Dharmodaya Sabhā, in Kusinagara, India. As General Secretary of the organization, Venerable *Amritānanda*, in 1946, succeeded in organising a bring good will mission to Nepal lead by Venerable Nārada Mahathera from Sri Lanka. After his visit to Nepal, monks and nuns could choose to study abroad either at Myanmar or Sri Lanka. There were two choices but because of Venerable *Amritānanda*'s influence, most chose to study in Sri Lanka rather in Myanmar. Venerable Thabbowe Ananda Revatha (M.A.) of Colombo Nawakorate Dvithiya Sanghanayaka Thero wrote for the annual memorial ceremony of Sanghanayaka *Pragyānanda*:

> I personally feel, the necessity of upbringing such an educated, qualified Buddhist monks for the rendered service which would enable to fulfil for the betterment of your country Nepal. [229]

Venerable *Amritānanda* sent many of his students to Sri Lanka to study at various Buddhist institutions. In time, the International Bhikkhu Training Foundation (IBTF) was founded in 1985 with Venerable Pannaloka as General Secretary. The organization ordained 26 youngsters from Nepal for their education and training in the Theravāda tradition of Sri Lanka.[230]

Before the connection with Sri Lanka was made, most monks had studied in Myanmar with the guidance and support of Venerable U Chandramani. All the first generation Theravādins studied in Myanmar and succeeded in teaching Dhamma to the Nepalese and having an impact on Nepalese society. Venerable Mahapragya, Venerable *Pragyānanda*, Venerable Buddhaghosa, Venerable *Nyānapurnika*, and *Anāgārikā Dhammāvati* are examples. They were highly respected pillars of the movement for the revival and development of Theravāda Buddhism in Nepal. On the other hand, Venerable *Amritānanda*, Venerable *Aniruddha*,

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[229] Bhikkhu Sudarshan (ed.), **Pragyananda Comemorative Volume**, 1995, p. 297.

[230] Venerable P. Soratha, "Sri Lanka's Contribution to the Growth of Theravāda Buddhism in Nepal", **Pragyananda Commemorative Volume**, 1995, pp. 298-300.

Venerable *Ashwaghosh*, Venerable *Kumar Kashyapa* and most of the younger monks were trained in Sri Lanka. Mostly, they studied at the *Pāli* and Buddhist University of Sri Lanka. India has also had an important role in the training of Nepalese Theravādins.

No.	Name	Country of Training
1	Ven. *Mahapragya*, Ven. *Pragyānanda* Ven. *Sakyananda*, Ven. *Buddhaghosha* Ven. *Nyānapurnika*, Ven. *Sumangala*	Myanmar
2	Ven. Aniruddha, Ven. *Amritānanda* Ven. Subodhananda, Ven. Mahanama Ven. Pragyarasmi, Ven. Cunda Ven. Ashwaghosa,Ven. Kumarkashyapa Ven. Vimalananda, Ven. Gunaghosa Ven. Seelabhadra, Ven. Maitree Ven. Chandragupta, Ven. Rahula Ven. Sivali, Ven. Nanda All students of Ven. Ashwaghosa Most are students of Ven. *Amritānanda*	Sri Lanka
3	Ven. *Dhammāloka*, Ven. Mahanama Ven. Prajnarasmi, Ven. Mahapantha Ven. Dhammananda, Ven. Jnanasagara Ven. *Sudarshan*, Ven. Bodhisena Ven. Sugatmuni	India
4	Ven.Dhammasobhana, Ven. Sumedha Ven. Dhammapalo, VenDharmagupta,	Thailand
	***Senior monks in the Theravāda revival** Those whose names are underlined are still alive and working for the further development of Theravāda in Nepal (2006).	

According to the most recent count there are 170 monks living and studying in many countries (*see appendix II*):[231]

[231] This Information, was collected by Venerable Kondannya, a Secretary of ANBA, from Vishwa Shanti Vihāra, Baneshwara.

This information changes year-by-year as every year many novices are sent to Myanmar, Thailand, and Sri Lanka. In Recent years, Venerable Vipassa has conducted *sāmanera* ordinations at Muni Vihāra of Bhaktapur and sent most of them to Thailand for further study. They go to a variety of different *vihāras* in Thailand and receive a modern education side by side with Dhamma. In the same way, Venerable Maitree, Venerable Sobhit, Venerable Saddatissa, Venerable Kolita, Venerable Dharmamurti are also sending *sāmaneras* to Sri Lanka, and Venerable Nyanapurninka and *Anāgārikā Dhammāvati* are sending *sāmaneras* and *anāgārikās* to Myanmar. Some monks and nuns were trained in India. These include Venerable *Sudarshan* Mahāsthavir a founder to Sri Kirti Vihāra and Lecturer at Tribhuvan University, who played an important role in various fields, Venerable Bodhisen and others.

Every year about 30 persons wearing the yellow robe go abroad for study. They are sent abroad but there is very little care and guidance. They face a variety of difficulties with unfamiliar social customs, languages, and food. They must resolve these problems themselves as there is no central organization to assist them. Because of these problems, the Nepalese monks in Sri Lanka founded the Nepali Bhikshu Student Sangha, to assist Nepalese students with their basic needs. There are no such organizations in Thailand or Myanmar, even though there are many Nepalese monks in those countries.

Ordinations are often conducted and the young monks and nuns sent abroad without informing the ANBM. Because the ANBM was not informed prior to going abroad, the returning monks and nuns are faced with a variety of questions, among them the important question of to which *vihāra* they belong, where will they live? Moreover, Sangha members are more-or-less hesitant to accept them as members of the Association. Sangha members who conduct ordinations, as well as the ANBM might want to consider these problems.

Most of the monks who trained abroad are well qualified, but are unable to apply their skills in Nepalese society because of social, cultural, and linguistic differences from the country in which they trained. Most trained in Buddhist countries where they were well respected as monks and supported according to Buddhist customs. The promotion of Buddhism is easy in those societies. This is very different from Nepalese

society, which is dominated by Hindu culture and lacks the customs of respecting and supporting Buddhist monks. Once they return to Nepal, then, the monks face language problems and social problems and thus find it difficult to apply their qualifications. It takes many years for them to adjust to Nepalese society and to find a field appropriate to their qualifications. There are many qualified monks both inside and outside the country, however, due to egocentrism and a lack of doctrinal unity, they tend each to do his own work and to propagate Buddhism in his own individual way. Their knowledge seems often to inflate their egos rather than to be applied to the promotion and development of Buddhism and society. As a result Venerable Ashwaghosa told me that they should be trained in Nepal, products of Nepal, for Nepalese society. He does not support sending them abroad for training. Another aspect of going abroad is that many disrobe after completing their studies, according to Venerable Ashwaghosa. *Anāgārikā Dhammāvati* made the same point about the monks disrobing after completing their studies abroad, making particular mention of those who study in Thailand. In any case, after eight decades of Theravāda Buddhism in Nepal, there are an increasing number of monks and nuns going abroad for study. Nepal still does not provide any institution to train and educate them, and the All Nepal Bhikkhu Association cannot fully support them. Almost all the present monks and nuns trained abroad.

3.6. Relationship between Nepal and Theravāda countries

The Buddhist countries of South and Southeast Asia played an important role in the revival and development of Theravāda Buddhism in Nepal. From the beginning of the revival movement, they have supported the movement by providing residences and education. In the last few decades this support has grown in measure from merely extending religious education to Nepalese monks and nuns in their countries. After the establishment of the Dharmodaya Sabhā in 1944, and with the fourth and 15th WFB conference being held in Kathmandu in 1956 and 1986 respectively, the relationship with Buddhist countries has became closer and has been recognized worldwide. Venerable *Amritānanda* was a Vice-president of the WFB for many years and travelled to Buddhist countries for propagation and to appeal for assistance in the development of Theravāda Buddhism in Nepal. The success of Theravāda Buddhism in Nepal would have been much reduced without the heartfelt assistance other countries, in particular Myanmar, Sri Lanka, and Thailand.

A. Relationship with Myanmar

Myanmar played one of the most important roles in the rise of the Theravāda monastic order in Nepal. When Venerable Mahapragya and Venerable Karmasheel re-ordained as *sāmaneras* in the Theravāda tradition, they did so in India with Venerable U Chandramani of Myanmar as preceptor. Venerable U Chandramani sent them to study in Myanmar. The Buddhists of Myanmar welcomed them warmly and trained them. They went to Arakan of Myanmar and studied Buddhism for some years. Later, most of the Nepalese monks went to Myanmar leading to good relations with the Government of Myanmar.

Venerable U Chandramani Mahathera[232] played one of the most important roles in the revival of the monastic order in modern Nepal. He ordained almost all the initial monks, 16 of them, at Kusinagara and sent them to study in Myanmar.[233] Moreover, the first three groups of *anāgārikās* ordained with him on different occasions.[234] Venerable *Sudarshan* writes,

> Venerable U Chandramani planted the seed of Theravāda Buddhism in Nepal; he is the propagator of Theravāda to Nepalese society. Almost all the monks and nuns were ordained by him. Therefore, the Nepalese monks and nuns are his students.[235]

Venerable U Chandramani first visited Nepal in 1944 on the day of Sivaratri.[236] He was not free to give a Dhamma talks openly but visited some places and gave talks. During his visit to Nepal, Ananda Kuti Vihāra was under construction. Venerable *Dhammāloka* expressed his desire to build a Dhamma hall at Ananda Kuti Vihāra and Venerable U Chandramani replied that if he built a beautiful hall he would donate a marble Buddha image. Venerable U Chandramani returned to India and Venerable *Dhammāloka* followed to receive the Buddha image. This

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232 Ratna Sundar Sakya, "Bhikshu U Chandramani Mahāsthavir", Baudha Jagatka Prasiddha Byekktiharu, Bhikkhu *Sudarshan* (ed.), (Kathmandu: Nepal Pariyatti Education, 2003), pp. 27-40.

233 Ibid. p. 36.

234 Ibid. 39.

235 Bhikkhu *Sudarshan*, "Jhi Guru Chandranmani Mahāsthavir", **Lumanke Bahapin**, Bhikkhu *Sudarshan* (ed.), (Kathmandu: Lasata Press, 2533 BE), pp. 1-10. My translation.

236 Sivaratri, a Hindu religious day celebrated at Pashupatinatha in Kathmandu. The government of Nepal allows Hindu priests from India to visit Nepal for the occasion.

Buddha image was the first Buddha statue for the Theravādins of Nepal in modern times.

In 1944 when the monks were expelled from the country for propagating Buddhism, they formed the Dharmodaya Sabhā a Buddhist organization with Venerable U Chandramani Mahathera as chairman. Venerable U Kittima another monk from Myanmar was also a member of the organization. On behalf of Dharmodaya Sabhā Venerable *Amritānanda* was able to organise a goodwill mission from Sri Lanka to Nepal in 1956. As a consequence, the Government of Nepal allowed the return of the Buddhist monks to Nepal. Also in 1956 Venerable U Chandramani made his second visit to Nepal in order to participate in the Fourth World Buddhist Summit. A few months later, he came for the third time and gave the higher ordination to *Sāmanera* Medhakar at Ananda Kuti Vihāra. His contribution to the Nepalese Buddhist order is immense. He was supporter, sponsor, teacher, friend, and mother to the Theravādins and propagators of Theravāda Buddhism in modern Nepal.

Another important monk named Bhikkhu Dhammawuda visited Nepal with Venerable Aniruddha in the 1950s. He had intended to stay for only a few days, but at the invitation of the devotees he remained for three months. On the way back some women followed him seeking ordination in Buddhism and to learn more about Buddhism. One of them was *Anāgārikā Dhammāvati*, presently the senior nun of Nepal. He took her to Myanmar to study. Later, many other monks and nuns went to study in Myanmar. Some of them returned to Nepal and worked hard for the propagation of Buddhism and for social welfare. Among them Venerable *Nyānapurnika* and *Anāgārikā Dhammāvati* are important figures. They continue to play a unique role in the development of Buddhism, improving the status of women, and social welfare. They are highly respected in Nepalese society.

In 1967, United Nations Secretary-General U Thant, a Buddhist of Myanmar, visited Nepal and invited all the Buddhist countries to participate in the renovation and development of Lumbini, as a site of international pilgrimage. This was another step in the revival of Theravāda Buddhism in Nepal, that the Buddhist countries joined hand-in-hand in the renovation. Lumbini became a centre for the development of Theravāda Buddhism in modern Nepal. Many monks and Theravāda

organizations have participated as partners and hosts in the development of the centre and in the development of Buddhism in Nepal.

The style of meditation taught by Venerable Mahasi Sayadaw of Myanmar was also one of the main reasons for the rapid development of Theravāda in Nepal. The style of meditation was introduced into Nepal by Nepalese monks and nuns who had been to Myanmar and who taken courses at Venerable Mahasi's. However, it was most widely received in the 1980's when *Anāgārikā* Dow Pannacari and *Anāgārikā* Dow Sukhacari of Mawlamyine, Myanmar organized the first meditation courses in Nepal, and the following year, 1982, Venerable Mahasi Sayadaw himself visited Nepal and taught meditation to the devotees of Nepal. Later, Mahasi Sayadaw style meditation was further promoted at the International Buddhist Meditation Centre at Sangkhamol, Kathmandu.[237] Meditation masters from Myanmar have been resident at the Centre since it opened. The first director of the Centre was Venerable U Pandita. A few years later, Venerable ASabhācara, a disciple of U Pandita took over as director.[238]

Anāgārikā Dow Gunavati,[239] a nun from Myanmar has been living in Nepal for nearly 42 years, working with *Anāgārikā Dhammāvati* for the promotion of Buddhism in Nepal. She came to Nepal 19 September 1963 and has remained. According to *Anāgārikā Dhammāvati*, she was able to establish the Dharmakirti Vihāra and work for propagation of Buddhism in Nepal because of *Anāgārikā* Dow Gunavati's dedicated and constant support. She continues to work side by side with *Anāgārikā Dhammāvati* for the development of Buddhism in Nepal.[240]

Besides contributions of individual Myanmar Buddhists to the development of Buddhism in Nepal, the Myanmar Government also awards religious titles to the monks and nuns of Nepal. The Government of Myanmar awarded the title Ariya Dhammarakkhita Nepal Buddhasasana Vamsalankara Siri to Venerable *Pragyānanda* on 1991

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[237] Phra Vipassi, op. cit., p. 110.

[238] Ma Gunawati, **Nepalaye 25 Dan Jigu Lumanti**, (**Memory: 25 years in Nepal)**, (Kathmandu: Dharmakirti Vihāra, 1987), pp. 29-30.

[239] See Ma Gunawati, 1987, op.cit.,

[240] Rina Tuladhar, "Yohma hmyay ya lidhansa", **The Dharmakirti**, year 22, vol. 11 2005, pp. 17-19.

(2048 Paush 6)[241] and awarded the title Aggamahasaddhamma Jyotika Dhaja to other monks.

Monks and nuns awarded titles by the Government of Myanmar		
Name	**Title**	**Date awarded**
Bhikshu *Shākyānanda*	Aggamahasaddhama Jotika Dhaja	1997
Bhikshu Aniruddha	Aggamahasaddhama Jotika Dhaja	1998
Bhikshu Buddhaghosha	Aggamahasaddhama Jotika Dhaja	1999 March 19[242]
Bhikshu Ashwaghosa	Aggamahasaddhama Jotika Dhaja	2000 March 19[243]
Bhikshu Kumar Kasyapa	Aggamahasaddhama Jotika Dhaja	2003
Bhikshu Jananapurnika	Aggamahasaddhama Jotika Dhaja Kammatthanacariya	2001
Anāgārikā Dhammāvati	Aggamahasaddhama Gantha Vachaka Pandita	1992

The recognition of these monks and nuns has been invaluable to the development of Buddhism in Nepal. Their creative work has also been significant for the development and extension of Theravāda Buddhism.[244]

B. Relationship with Sri Lanka

The success of the Mahābodhi Society and the dedication of its founder *Anāgārikā* Dhammapala to the revival of Buddhism in South Asia greatly influenced the Nepalese. As a result of Nepalese contacts with the Mahābodhi Society from the very beginning, the Theravāda revival campaign in Nepal has succeeded. The campaign gained momentum with the establishment of Dharmodaya Sabhā, when Venerable *Amritānanda*, the secretary of the Sabhā wrote a letter of appeal to different Buddhist countries to protest the Government of Nepal's 1944 expulsion of monks from the country. The following year, Venerable *Amritānanda* went to Sri Lanka and was able to organise a goodwill mission to Nepal. The well-known monk Venerable Nārada Mahathera headed the mission which included Venerable Piyadassi, Dr.

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[241] R. B. Bandya, "Nepalay Buddhadharma Punarjagaranay Adhunika Pravartaka Sanghamahanayaka" **Pragyananda Commorative Volume**, 1995, p. 17.

[242] Sangharaksita, Bhikkhu Ashwaghosa, op. cit., p. 97.

[243] Ibid., p. 97.

[244] Sukhi Hotu Desk, "A Short Auto Biography at a Glance", **The Ananda Bhumi** (Kathmandu: Ananda Kuti Vihāra, 2001 CE), p. 27.

Ratna Surya, Prof. Aryapala, and Venerable Amritandna.[245] On his first visit to Nepal, Venerable Nārada Mahathera met with the new Prime Minister Padmasamser JBR in Kathmandu and the expelled monks were given permission to return to Nepal.[246] Venerable Nārada Mahathera visited Nepal six times.[247] His second visit was on 4th May 1948 for the inauguration of a Sri Lankan style stupa at Ananda Kuti Vihāra. That visit was only for this celebration of *Baisakha Purnima* and the inauguration of the stupa, but at the request of the devotees he remained for one month. He wrote of his experiences in the **Silumin** weekly magazine. Venerable Aniruddha translated the article into Nepali and published it in the **Dharmodaya** magazine (No. 2, Vol. 1) in 1948 with the name, "Nepal Desh Baudha Kirti".[248] Each of his visits had significance for the Nepalese Theravādins. Among other things, he negotiated the return of the monks from exile, brought relics of the Buddha to Nepal from Sri Lanka, planted a sapling of the Bodhi Tree from Sri Lanka, and constructed the Sri Lankan stupa and Nepal's first *uposathagara* at Ananda Kuti Vihāra. On his third visit, he persuaded Prime Minister Mohan Samsher to declare Vesak Day a holiday for Buddhists. He was well respected for his dedication to the development of Theravāda Buddhism in Nepal. Every time he visited Nepal he stayed for many weeks and visited many different places, giving Dhamma talks as a part of the propagation of Buddhism.[249] Venerable Piyadassi of Sri Lanka also visited many times after his first visit with Venerable Nārada Mahathera as a member of the 1956 goodwill mission. Venerable Sugandha, Nepal-born secretary to H.H. the Supreme Patriarch of Thailand says that Venerable Piyadassi trained *sāmaneras* while he was in Nepal. Venerable Sugandha was one of those *sāmaneras*.

In February 1951 Venerable M. Pannasiha from Sri Lanka participated in the recitation of the *Paritta Sutta* as a blessing to His Majesty King Tribhuvan. At the end of the ceremony he tied a holy thread on His Majesty's wrist as a blessing.[250] The international relationship was broadened by the Fourth World Buddhist Summit in

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[245] Ratna Sunder Sakya, **Bhikshu Nārada Mahāsthavir**, op. cit., p. 5.

[246] Venerable *Amritānanda*, 1986, op. cit., p. 8-9.

[247] First visit on 1946, second on 5 May 1948, third on 23 April 1950, fourth on 31 March 1961, fifth on 1965 and sixth on 1979.

[248] Ratna Sunder Sakya, **Bhikshu Nārada Mahāsthavir,** op. cit., p. 6.

[249] Ibid., pp. 1-9.

[250] Bhikkhu *Amritānanda*, **A Short History of Theravāda Buddhism in Modern Nepal**, op. cit., p. 10.

1956 in Kathmandu celebrating 2,500 years of the Buddhist Era. In his presidential address to the conference, Dr. G. P. Malalasekera[251] spoke of the main objectives of the WFB in the years to come. He agreed in the greater part with the objectives of the Dharmodaya Sabhā.[252] This opened a new stage in the revival of Theravāda Buddhism in Nepal.

In addition to the material and educational support of the Sri Lankan Sangha and Buddhist organizations, the Mahasangha assembled at Cakkindarama in Colombo on February 23, 1955, and conferred upon Bhikkhu *Amritānanda* the title of Mahanayaka Thera. It was the eve of his return to his motherland to work for the cause of Buddhism.[253]

In 1976, the Buddhist Academy of Ceylon, Colombo, conferred on Venerable *Amritānanda* the title Sahitya Chakravarti (D. Litt.) for "the services rendered for the advancement of knowledge in Buddha Dhamma and its Philosophy and Psychology".[254] In 1984, all the three *nikayas* of the Bhikkhu Mahasangha of Sri Lanka jointly honoured Venerable Bhikkhu *Amritānanda* as the Mahanayaka of Nepal with the title Tripitaka Visarada Sasanajotaka. In the same year he was given the title of Sri Dhammarakshita Vamsalankar Dharmakirti by Vajiranana in Colombo.

In such a way Sri Lanka awarded different titles to other Nepalese Theravāda monks, recognizing their dedication to the revival and development of Theravāda Buddhism in Nepal. Venerable Aniruddha was given the title Buddha JanmaBhumi Jotaka Sasana Kirti Shri in 1995 and Venerable Kumar Kasyapa was given the title Vidyalankara Padmabhushan in 2001.

Since the early years of the revival movement, Sri Lanka has played an important role in the revival and development of Theravāda Buddhism in Nepal. It continues its support by providing Buddhist education to Nepalese ordained monks and nuns. In addition to Venerable *Amritānanda*, Venerable Aniruddha, and Venerable Kumar Kasyapa, many other monks who were at the forefront of the revival of Buddhism in Nepal studied in Sri Lanka. These include such monks as, for example,

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[251] Ratna Sunder Sakya, **Prof. G.P. Malalasekera**, op. cit., p. 10-17.
[252] Ria Kloppenborg, op. cit., p. 309.
[253] N. B. Bajracarya, **Amritanjali**, op. cit., p. 163.
[254] Ibid., p. 164.

Venerable Subhodhananda, Venerable Mahanama, Venerable Pragyarasmi, Venerable Ashwaghosa, and Venerable Vimalanada. Today, most of the active monks in Nepal trained and received their educations in institutions in Sri Lanka.[255] The Sri Lanka Nepal Baudha Congress Sangha was formed in Colombo Mahābodhi Vihāra in the 1980s to provide facilities for monks from Nepal and to support propagation of Buddhism in Nepal. On 11th June 1980, Sri Gamini, the Sri Lankan Minister of Health, inaugurated the foundation.[256] After the establishment of this foundation, a branch was opened in Kathmandu but due to problems the foundation did not last. Presently, there are hundreds of monks and nuns studying in Sri Lanka and Sri Lankan Sangha, and the Government widely supports them. The Sri Lankan Embassy in Kathmandu, Nepal also provides scholarships for *pariyatti* education at Ananda Kuti Vihāra and supports other Buddhist activities across the country.

C. Relationship with Thailand,

Thailand and Nepal have had good relationships since ancient times.[257] Formal diplomatic relations were established on 30th November 1960. Since then, high-level exchange visits have played an important role in cultivating mutual understanding between the two countries and they have enhanced prospects for broader political and economic relations.

Ties were strengthened by the Lumbini development project. The Thai Government approved the construction of a Thai Buddhist monastery in Nepal in 1992, and in 1995, His Holiness Somdet Phra Nyanasamvara, and Supreme Patriarch of Thailand, presided over laying the foundation stone. Representatives of the Thai and Nepalese Governments attended the ceremony.[258]

The first Thai to visit Lumbini was Prince Prissadang in 1897. He came from Sri Lanka where he had ordained as a Buddhist monk.[259]

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[255] Venerable P. Soratha, 1995, op. cit., pp. 298-300.

[256] Information from the Library of Prof. David Gellner in Oxford University, UK, 17 August 2005.

[257] Bhikkhu Sugandha, "Lumbini: the Symbol of Thai-Nepalese Relations", **Naew Na, Daily Newspaper**, July 7, 2003, p. 19-20.

[258] Ibid.

[259] Ibid.

After a long gap, in 1966, a group of Thai monks led by H.H. the Supreme Patriarch Somdet Phra Ariyavamsagatayan (Phra Pun Punnasiri Mahathera 2439-2516 BE) of Wat Phra Jetuphon or Wat Pho visited Kathmandu. He was Deputy Supreme Patriarch at the time. This was followed by the visit of the current Thai Supreme Patriarch in 1971, in his capacity as President of Mahamakut Buddhist University. He took a study tour of religious affairs and education in Nepal. He learned that Buddhism in Nepal was in a critical condition, urgently needing revival and support from other Buddhist entities. In his capacity as President of Mahamakut University he kindly responded to the need by offering scholarships for two Nepalese monks, Venerable Susobhana and Venerable Aggananda (Sunanda). They were to remain in Thailand to study Buddhism and stay at Wat Bovoranives until the completion of their studies.[260] This initiated a good religious relationship between Thailand and Nepal and made Thailand another possible destination for Nepalese monks going abroad to study. In time, many Nepalese monks have gone to Thailand to study, and continue to do so today.

In 1974, Venerable *Amritānanda*, president of the All Nepal Bhikkhu Association was invited by Sammak Poosawan of Thailand to participate in the cremation of the Supreme Patriarch. While there, he was granted an audience with His Majesty the King at his Chitralada Villa on 24 April 1974.[261] In 2518 BE, from 21 July 1975 to 26 November 1975, four months and six days,[262] the most Venerable Somdet Phra Maharajmangalacharn (Venerable Phra Dhammadhirarajmahamuni), abbot of Wat Paknam Bhasicharoen took the three months rains-retreat at Ananda Kuti Vihāra, Kathmandu. He was the first Thai monk to have lived for so long and so close to Nepalese society. Venerable Sumedha, a Nepalese novice went with him to Thailand for study. After nearly four years of leaving Nepal, in 2522 BE, the most Venerable Somdet Phra Maharajmangalacharn visited again to Nepal with 24 Thai monks, 2 nuns and 51 lay devotees for the *Kathina* offering ceremony. The *Kathina* was offered at Manimandapa Vihāra in Lalitpur as the main site with other *vihāras* participating.[263] That *Kathina* ceremony is still remembered by

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[260] **Biography of His Holiness Somdet Phra Nyanasamvara, The Supreme Patriarch of the Thai Sangha**, (Bangkok: Karn Sasana Printing Press, 2546 BE), p. 96.

[261] Ibid.; N. B. Bajracarya, **Amritanjali**, op. cit., p. 199.

[262] Somdet Phramaharajmangalacharn, **Cothmai Himaphan,** 2nd edition. (Bangkok: Mahachulalongkorn University Press, 2005), p. 231.

[263] R. B. Bandya, **Nepalay Buddhadharma Punarjagaranay Adhunika Pravartaka Sanghamahanayaka,** op. cit., p. 15.

senior Nepalese monks and devotees of Nepal as the first *Kathina* ceremony involving monks of another country, and with a vast amount of material and many devotees. The Venerable Somdet Phra went to Nepal for *Kathina* again in 1981, celebrating at Ananda Kuti Vihāra on 15th October. Mr. Prasert Ung Olan sponsored this *Kathina*.[264] He offered not only material goods but also scholarships for Nepalese monk and nuns. Mr. Prasert Ung Olan supports many Buddhist activities and often visits Buddhist sites in Nepal and India.

Going in the other direction, in 1976 (BS 2033) Venerable Phra Brahmagunaporn of Wat Sarket and General-Secretary of Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University invited Venerable *Pragyānanda* Mahasthavir visit Thailand for the first time. On 1978 (BS 2035 Paush 21) Venerable *Pragyānanda*, with Bhikkhu *Sudarshan*, *Sāmanera* Maha Javana, and four devotees, came to Bangkok and stayed for two weeks.[265] They were warmly welcome at the airport by Venerable Phra Brahmagunaporn along with Thai and Nepali monks. When the group returned to Nepal, *Sāmanera* Maha Javana remained at Wat Sarket for further training under the guidance of Venerable Phra Brahmagunaporn (Now, H. H. Somdet Phra Buddhachariya, acting supreme patriarch of Thailand 2006)

Three months later, Venerable *Pragyānanda* and the Lumbini Development Trust invited Somdet Phra *Dhiranyanamuni* Mahathera (*Upasangharaja*) and Venerable Phra Brahmagunaporn to visit Nepal. They accepted the invitation and arrived in Nepal on 1978 (2035 Phagun 28) with one devotee. A welcoming ceremony was held at Sakyashingha Vihāra in Lalitpur. Many monks and devotees offered garlands and other gifts to the guests. In the following year, on 10 March 1979, the Supreme Patriarch of Thailand visited Nepal.[266]

In 1985, the most venerable Somdet Phra *Mahārājamangalāchārn* (*Phra Dhammadhirarājmahāmuni*) the abbot of Wat Paknam Bhashicharoen Bangkok of Thailand sent a special invitation to Venerable *Sanghamahanayaka Pragyānanda* of Nepal for a second visit to Thailand. The purpose of that visit was to make an image of Venerable *Pragyānanda* and to give him a medical check-up. Work on

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[264] **Anandabhumi**, vol. 9, no. 6, 1981.
[265] R. B. Bandya, **Pragyananda Commemorative volume**, op. cit., p. 15.
[266] Ibid.

the image was begun on 1985 (4th Fagun 2042) with Venerable *Pragyānanda* himself as model.[267] The image was sponsored by Venerable Somdet Phra *Mahārājamangalāchārn* and is now placed in Sri Kirti Vihāra at Kirtipur. On that visit Venerable *Pragyānanda* was granted an audience with His Majesty the King of Thailand. On behalf of the Nepalese Sangha and devotees Venerable *Pragyānanda* requested permission to celebrate the 73rd birth anniversary of H.H. Somdet Phra *Nyānasamvara* in Nepal. His Majesty granted the request and supported the Nepalese Buddhists in celebrating H. H. Somdet Phra *Nyānasamvara's* birth anniversary in Nepal.

On October 25, 1985 His Holiness the Supreme Patriarch arrived in Nepal for the celebration of his birth anniversary. As part of the celebrations, he gave 73 Nepalese Sakya men temporary ordination at Sri Kirti Vihāra. For this ordination, Their Majesties the King and Queen of Thailand offered 20 sets of robes. This was unprecedented in the Buddhist history of modern Nepal. This was the first ordination conducted with Thai Royal Patronage in Nepal.[268] Their Majesties the King and Queen of Nepal also received His Holiness the Supreme Patriarch in audience at the Royal Palace on 29th November as a royal guest. These events led to an earnest interest among Nepalese throughout the country in entering the monkhood for the purpose of studying and reviving Buddhism. His Holiness has not only supported the education of the monastic order, he has also support to construction of monasteries in Nepal. With the His Holiness's financial support, Venerable Sumangala was able to establish the IBMC at Sankhamul. Since then Sri Kirti Vihāra has gradually developed as a Nepalese-Thai Buddhist culture centre. In 1989, the construction of the *uposathagara* was begun with the support of His Holiness and the foundation ceremony of the *uposatha* was held 8 June 1989. Later, Thai Hall and Thai Bhawan were built with the support of Thai Airways International and Thai and Nepalese Buddhists.

From the time in 1971 when His Holiness Somdet Phra Nyānasamvara accepted two novices from Nepal to study Buddhism in Thailand, the number of Nepalese novices sent for study to Thailand has gradually grown. In addition, Thailand has been providing support to the

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[267] Ibid.

[268] **Biography of His Holiness Somdet Phra Nyanasamvara, The Supreme Patriarch of the Thai Sangha**, 2546 BE) op. cit., p. 97; *Amritānanda*, **A short History of Theravad Buddhism in Nepal**, op. cit., p. 18-22.

endeavour to strengthen Buddhism in Nepal. Since 1972, the Thai Government as well as individual Thais has provided a number of short- and long-term scholarships for Nepalese monks and novices furthering their religious studies in Thailand. In 1987 Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya Buddhist University conferred the honorary degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Buddhist studies) upon Venerable *Amritānanda* for his "many sided activities for the promotion of the cause of Buddhism in the kingdom of Nepal and elsewhere." That was the first time that any non-Thai had been conferred this honour by the University.[269]

Besides these contributions to the development of Theravāda Buddhism in Nepal, the contribution of the Thai Sangha and the Thai people to the construction of Sri Kirti Vihāra is unique in Nepal. In 1985, while His Holiness Somdet Phra Nyanasamvara the 19th Supreme Patriarch of Thailand was in Nepal for the celebration of his sixth cycle or 72nd birth anniversary,[270] His Holiness conducted a mass one-week *sāmanera* ordination of seventy-three Sakya devotees on 24th November 1985 at Nagar Mandap Sri Kirti Vihāra in Kirtipur. At the end of the ordination period, on 30th November, His Holiness returned to Sri Kirti Vihāra after having visited Buddhist sides of Nepal for his final instructions to the ordinands at the Vihāra. His Holiness, along with Mr. Vimol Techaphaiboon, and other devotees contributed funds to various organizations for the development of Buddhism in Nepal. Among the organizations receiving contributions were:[271]

1. N. M. Sri Kirti Vihāra	$ 11,400
2. Buddha Vihāra for construction of IBMC	$ 11,400
3. Buddhist Library at Sugandha Vihāra	$ 1,000
4. Dyankuti Vihāra Banepa	$ 500
5. Sanghanayaka of Nepal for religious purposes	$ 1,470.58
6. Nepal Baudha Pariyatti Sikkhā	$ 980

In 1991, the construction of an *uposatha* hall at Sri Kirti Vihāra was started with the support of His Holiness Somdet Phra Nyanasamvara and other Thais. The pinnacles of the *uposatha* hall in the monastery were

[269] N. B. Bajracarya, **Amritanjali**, op. cit., p. 172.

[270] Based on the report prepared by Venerable Anilman (Phra Sugandha)preserved in the Supreme Patriarch's Secretary's office, wat Bovoranives Vihāra, Bangkok.

[271] Phra Sugandha Dhammasakiyo & Suchao Ploychum, **Phra Sasankit Nai Tan Prathet Kong Somdet Phra Nyanasamvara**, (Bangkok: Wat Phra Ram 9 Kanchanavisek, 2546 BE), p. 186.

installed 13th July 1991 by H. E. Satavira Suvanadat, former Royal Thai Ambassador to Nepal. The *uposatha* hall was a combined Thai-Nepalese cultural structure. The construction is of Thai-style architecture but the windows and doors are Nepalese style with artwork depicting the life of the Buddha.[272] It has become an international centre for Buddhists of the entire world. Most years, Thai devotees celebrate the *Kathina* festival here and Thai holy days are celebrated here at Sri Kirti Vihāra. Presently, over sixty monks, novices and nuns are studying in Thailand.

It is clear, then, that the success of the movement for the revival and development of Theravāda Buddhism in Nepal is due in large part to the heartfelt assistance of other, especially Buddhist, countries. Without their assistance supplementing the firm dedication of Nepalese monks, Buddhism would not have been revived in a lasting way in Nepalese society. An increasing number of novices, monks, and *anāgārikās* in Nepal have gained the option of going abroad to study. All the Buddhist countries are supporting the development of Theravāda Buddhism in different ways: financially, materially, and educationally. These Buddhist countries are always welcoming, supporting the Buddhist monks and nuns (*See Appendix II*). The Theravādins of Nepal have been invited to participate in many different international conferences in these countries, for example, the World Buddhist Summit, Buddhist conferences, and the international recognition of the Day of Vesak festival. In recent decades over two hundred novices, monks, and nuns have studied abroad. Some have returned to Nepal to serve according to their qualifications for the development of Buddhism in Nepal. Many are still studying abroad countries. When they return they will be a new generation labouring for the development of Buddhism and fulfilling the needs of the society of modern Nepal.

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[272] Phra Sugandha Dhammasakiyo, op. cit., p. 29ff.

Chapter: IV

IMPACT AND CONTRIBUTIONS TO NEPALESE SOCIETY

The revival of Theravāda Buddhism in modern Nepal opened a new chapter for the Nepalese, socially as well as religiously. Until 1951, the *Rānā* isolationist regime ruled Nepal for 104 years as a pro-Hindu and traditionally autocratic State. Despite the pro-Hindu Government, the revival movement, having begun in the 1930s, has about 70 years of history, and has various important roles in Nepalese society. Especially, it contributed greatly to the awareness of literature, education, art, architecture, culture, and tradition, as well as enhancing social welfare and introducing new rituals. Revivalists have produced a goodly amount of literature, enhancing awareness of the importance of education. They have introduced new meanings to rites and culture, for example the *buddhapuja, paritta* chanting, and birth and death rituals. Venerable Nyanapurnina has said:

> Nepal is a multi-cultural country and it is clear which culture has the greatest influence. However, Theravāda Buddhism has contributed smoothly and had important impacts on Nepalese society. Especially, in participating in *buddhapuja* and *paritta* functions, observing *sila*, and practicing meditation. Moreover, *pariyatti* education is gaining in popularity in Nepalese society.[273]

It is clear then that Theravāda Buddhism has become a living feature of Nepalese society. The following section discusses in some detail the literary, educational, and social welfare influences, among others.

4.1. Literature

The Tipitaka is one of the oldest bodies of Buddhist literature. Because it is written in the *Pāli* Language, Theravāda Buddhism is also known as *Pāli* Buddhism. In 1991 the *Pāli* scholar Oscar B. Harem

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[273] My tranalation.

published a report entitled, "The existence of 'The Older *Pāli* Manuscript' from four folios of the Vinaya Pitaka in the National Archives, Kathmandu". Harem found that this was one of the oldest *Pāli* manuscripts in existence. This was an important discovery for the Buddhist world.[274] According to his report, those manuscripts are eight to nine centuries old, including parts of the *Cullavagga* of the Vinaya Pitaka and written in Gupta script.[275] The discovery not only identified the oldest extant *Pāli* Buddhist manuscripts but indicated also the presence of Theravāda Buddhism in ancient Nepal. However, for reasons that are not yet entirely clear, Theravāda Buddhism disappeared from Nepal, and the Buddhism that remained was greatly changed. *Pāli* literature was finally reintroduced in the 20th century.

The Buddha allowed his teachings to the given in the local languages, so that they would be understood by everyone and thus be more effective. Nepal is the country where the Buddha was born. However, Buddhism here was in a dormant state, until the early 20th century. The revivalists were from the Newār communities and the Newāri language was suppressed by the Government. The limitations imposed at that time on establishing institutions and organizations, and the lack of religious freedom and in writing and studying in the local languages, brought about decay in the literature, culture, and religion of Nepal. When the Theravāda revival activities began, the Theravādins dedicated their efforts to the awareness of and creation of literature. They faced many obstacles but kept the awareness of literacy alive. As a result, Theravāda Buddhism and literature have experienced revival side-by-side and hand-in-hand.

Literature was a main instrument of the Theravāda revival activists, since the movement began in 1924. *Dharmāditya Dharmācārya* initiated the literary side of the revival by translating *Pāli* discourses and publishing articles in the Mahābodhi journal in India. In those days, Nepal was under the control of the isolationist *Rānā* regime, and study was not allowed at all. Education was not open to the public, but only to those within the circle of the *Rānā* family and some civil servants. There were very few who could read and write. Literature was very rare and independent publishing was banned. There were many cases of people

[274] Amita Dhakhwa, **Tripitaka: Eka Paricaya,** 2000, op. cit., p. 3.

[275] Bhikkhu Kondannya, "Nepal Mandalako Paramparagat Bauddhadharmako Bikasma Theravāda buddhadharmako Yogdan**," The Shanti Sandesh**, (Kathmandu: Vishwa Shanti Baudha Shikshalaya, 2005), p. 106-107.

being imprisoned for publishing leaflets and pamphlets. Therefore, there was very little literature, and what there was, was published at great risk from the regime. There were small legal publications but most were produced on special State occasions only. Nevertheless some religious books and scriptures were kept secretly. These books were copied by hand, as there was no access to printing presses. The very few books that were legally printed for special functions could not be widely disseminated because of Government suppression, lack of instruments, and lack of funds for publicity.[276] At the same time, very few people could read and write.

There were a few Hindu works in Nepali available, sponsored by the regime. But in Hindu law, ordinary people are not permitted to read sacred books. So, even the available Hindu literature was accessible only to limited groups and families. In any case, most of the people in Kathmandu are Newāri. They were either wholly uneducated or were unable to read the Nepali language; very few, indeed, could even speak it. For these reasons, literature was poorly developed in Nepal. The Theravāda revival coincided with a revival of literacy and literature, as a look at the history of Nepali literature shows. Historians of Nepali literature say that the revival of Theravāda Buddhism is the revival of literature in modern Nepal. We may better say that literary awareness was introduced to modern Nepal along with the introduction of Theravāda Buddhism. Literacy, literature, and literary awareness, therefore, are among the significant contributions of Theravāda Buddhism to Nepalese society.

Before the movement to revive Theravāda, there was little opportunity for education, and most people had no opportunity to learn to read and write. The regime kept the people in the dark in order to control them more easily, and attempted to prevent contact with other countries. When the Buddhist revivalists opened their campaign and appeared in Nepal, they introduced Buddhist doctrines through magazine and leaflets. This generated an awareness of literature and the importance of literacy among the Nepalese. This awareness sparked a renaissance of literature. Since the early movement focused on the minority, Nepal Bhāsā language, the impact was greatest at first on the community that used that

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[276] Phra Vipassi, op. cit., p. 107-8.

language.[277] However, Buddhist literature was also produced in other languages and the growth of literacy and literary awareness spread to other languages, including the official Nepali. The revival of the Theravāda thus made important contributions to the development of Nepali literature, especially in the field of Buddhism.

The revival of Theravāda Buddhism in Nepal, then, made two very important contributions in this area: the awareness of literature and the creation of literature. As mentioned earlier, education was rare and there were very few who could read and write. The Nepalese were inspired through the Theravāda revival movement to learn and to preserve their own literature, both Nepali and Newāri. [278]

Very little was published during the tenure of the isolationist *Rānā* regime. The regime also failed to create educational opportunities and most Nepalese could not read and write. A few books were published on special but limited occasions, but they were not widely disseminated. Then the Theravāda Buddhist revival movement began to publish journals and books, distributing them free of charge. By those activities literature was taken from the exclusive control and access of a small elite and made public and widely available. Venerable Sugandha expressed to me that the publication of books was widely practiced after the revival of Theravāda Buddhism in Nepal. Every year there are many Buddhist books published.[279] Therefore, in other words the literature of Nepal awakened, indeed to a large extent came into being, through Theravāda revivalism. Not only did the movement raise awareness of literature, but it also educated people at the monasteries. *Anāgārikā Dhammāvati* says that the movement gave the Nepalese the great opportunity of realizing the importance of education and of literature.

According to *Anāgārikā Dhammāvati*, the Theravāda movement introduced a sense of freedom and awareness of the possibility of education among women, by opening their schools to all and thus breaking centuries-old barriers of sex discrimination. The revival of Theravāda Buddhism was the revival of education and awareness of

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[277] Bhikkhu Bodhigyan, **Buddhist Literature in Nepal Bhāsā,** (Kathmandu: PGD in Buddhist Studies, Tribhuwan University, 2056 BE), p. 4.

[278] Information from Phra Sugandha Dhammasakiyo at Wat Bhawan, Bangkok. 13 January 2006.

[279] Information from Phra Sugandha.

literature in Nepal. Venerable *Nyānapurnika* Mahāsthavir told me in an interview:

> Theravāda Buddhism has contributed greatly to Nepali literature since its revival. Theravāda Buddhism is responsible for the awareness of literature and the revival of Nepali literature. We can see this in the present situation. Especially, if we look at Buddhist literature in Nepal almost all the works are influenced by Theravāda Buddhism.[280]

Buddhist literature took first step in building an awareness of literature with the publication of **Buddhadharma**, the Buddhist journal, later called **Buddhadharma and Nepal Bhāsā**.[281] This publication, produced by Dharmaditya Dharmacarya, a student from the Newār community, was the first publication to introduce pure Buddhist views to Nepal from India. Due his family background as a Newār Buddhist and due to State suppression of the Newāri language, he used Newāri as a bridge the hearts of the Newār community. He published *Pāli* discourses translated into Newāri to Nepal, and he was thus the first to introduce *Pāli* Buddhism to modern Nepal.

Seventy years ago, in 1931, the first translation of the *Dhammapada* in Nepal Bhāsā was published by Dr. Indraman Vaidya. Later, Venerable *Dhammāloka* and Venerable *Pragyānanda* published translations of *Pāli* discourses and chants (*paritta*).[282] Later, Venerable *Amritānanda* Mahasthavira, and gradually other monks, became involved in producing books on Buddhism, Buddhist stories and the like. Venerable *Amritānanda* was unparalleled in the creation of Nepali literature. He published a series of Buddhist books in Nepali, known as the Diamond of Nepali Literature. His work and dedication in producing books on Buddhism has no equal. He was unique, and made very significant contributions to the field of Buddhism and literature of Nepal. Next to him was late Venerable *Sudarshan* Mahāsthavir and others. Today, most of the Sutta Pitaka has been translated into both Newāri and Nepali language.

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[280] My translation.
[281] Lacoul, **Dharmaditya Ya Buddha Dharma wa Nepal Bhāsā Muna,** op. cit., p. 1ff.
[282] Bhikkhu *Dhammāloka*, **A Pilgrimage in China**, op. cit., p. 89.

A. Buddhist literature in Nepali Language

The Nepali language, or *Parvati*, is the national language of Nepal. Today, almost all Nepalese speak that language and it dominates Nepalese literature. Before the Theravāda revival movement, a Buddhist literature was very rare. Moreover learning and teaching to others was prohibited. Only in limited areas of Newār Buddhism was Buddhism practice and taught. When the revival activities began, all the communities became interested in learning and studying Buddhism. Buddhism became the favourite religion of King Tribhuvan, who revived the monarchy and was Nepal's beloved king (*Rastra Pita)*. For these reasons Buddhist literature was introduced to Nepalese society and many people were interested in learning. But there were very few Buddhist books in Nepali until Venerable *Amritānanda* launched a series of *Pāli* Nepali translations in the 1960s. *Dharmāditya Dharmācārya* had published some article in Nepali Language through magazines in India in early revival campaign. In 1940, Ven. Mahapragya also had written Theravādin *Lalitavistara* and published 80 copies in A4 paper with 350 pages. It was published in Kalingpong, which was re-printed again later. Venerable *Amritānanda*'s series was published by the Ananda Kuti Vihāra Guthi. Venerable *Amritānanda* was one of the few monks who wrote mainly in Nepali. As he had been born and brought up in Tansen, for him, as for other Newārs whose homes were outside the valley, Newāri was only used in the home or with one's intimates. Nepali was, and is, the language of literacy and of government. There was no single book, which is translated from *pāli* before venerable *Amritānanda* had started his vast collection of *Buddhakālin* (at the time of the budda). It is not merely a translation but divided into ten topics and extended to 31 volumes. Sarah LeVine maintains that Venerable *Amritānanda* began publishing his translations in the 1960s there were no Buddhist books in Nepali.'[283] Within a decade of its establishment, the Ananda Kuti Vihāra Trust had published 44 books in the series.[284] His 31 voluminury work became the larget sigle collection among Nepali language publications which consist of over 15,000 pages. With the publication of this series Nepalese from King Birendra, to high State officials, to scholars of Nepal expressed their admiration and gratitude. They felt that the series had

[283] Sarah LeVine 2001, op. cit., p. 106-107.

[284] **Publication of Ananda Kuti Vihāra Trust**, (Kathmandu: Ananda Kuti Vihāra Trust, 1985), pp. 1-2.

initiated a new era of Nepali literature, filling, at the same time, the gap left by the absence of Buddhist literature.[285]

> In truth, these books on Buddhism should have been written many years ago, but unfortunately, there were not the scholars to develop Buddhist Nepali literature. Those scholars are still wanted. Venerable *Amritānanda*'s works have not only developed Nepali literature but also bring more glory to Nepali literature.

When, education had become common, the Nepali language came to be more nearly universal. All Nepalese learn the language in school, and the language is mandatory for official transactions. By the time *pariyatti* education was begun the Theravādins had started publishing in Nepali. Nowadays, most of the monks and nuns use primarily Nepali for the propagation of Buddhism. Most of the Buddhist magazines and books are printed in Nepali.

B. Theravāda Buddhist Literature in Nepal Bhāsā

In the nineteenth century, Nepal was ruled by the *Rānā* regime, which was religiously pro-Hindu and politically autocratic.[286] The Newāri language or Nepal Bhāsā was suppressed at that time. If someone wanted to publish they should do so in the Nepali language, which became the national language after the democracy. In the same way, Theravāda Buddhism was banned from any religious activities in Nepal. Due to persecution, suppression, and negligence of the Newāri language and of Theravāda religious activities, Theravāda revivalists chose Newāri as the language of the revival movement and for publishing Buddhist doctrines. Another reason for using Newāri was that the revival movement issued largely from the Newār community, and the leaders sometimes may have seen their movement as being part of the Newār cultural and literary renaissance. As a consequence the history of the Theravāda revival movement and the revival of Newāri run parallel to each other. In other words, "the history of the Newār language is the history of Theravāda Buddhism in Nepal." Despite the centuries' long gap, Theravāda Buddhism begin to revive in Nepal, and the *Pāli* language was

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[285] Ibid., 1985, pp. 26-32.

[286] Phra Sugandha (Anil Sakya), **Role of Gyanmala Liturgy in Nepalese Theravāda Community,** op.cit., London, 29th August to 3 September 2005, p. 3.

reintroduced to Nepalese society by Dharmaditya Dharmacarya in 1920s by publishing both in *Pāli* and translation the main *Pāli* Suttas and chants, for example the *Dhammacakkappavatana Sutta*, the *Mangala Sutta*, and the *Anattalakkhana Sutta*.[287] Publishing mainly in the **Buddhadharma** journal he introduced *Pāli* literature in the Nepal Bhāsā language to Nepalese society. This contributed greatly to the renovation of Nepal Bhāsā in modern Nepal. His publications had a great impact on Buddhism and the Newāri language.[288]

Pāli discourses first appeared in Nepal Bhāsā in the **Buddhadharma wa Nepal Bhāsā** and **Dhammaduta** magazines in the years 1923-30. Almost all were translated by *Dharmāditya Dharmācārya*. The discourses were translated from the Sutta Pitaka, including, for example the *Dhammacakkappavatana Sutta*,[289] the *Sigalovada Sutta*, and the *Jivaka Sutta.*[290] The first version of the *Dhammapada*, one of the best known canonical *Pāli* texts was translated into Nepal Bhāsā Dr. Indraman Vaidya, a brother of *Dharmāditya Dharmācārya*. It was published by Sadhu Man Bhisakacharya in Calcutta, India in 1931. Although it was incomplete and imperfect, it was among the first translations from the *Pāli* Tipitaka into the vernacular of Nepal.[291]

Buddhist monks published books throughout 1930s. Venerable *Dhammāloka* published several books after returning from his pilgrimage.[292] According to Venerable *Dhammāloka*, everyone was interested in having Buddhist books. So, he published more books in Nepal Bhāsā, such as **Buddha Guna**, **Gyanmala**, **Ishwar Mhasike**, **Pragyadarshan**, and **Satipatthana**. Venerable *Pragyānanda*, Nepal's first Sanghanayaka published the **Mahaparitrana**, or protective blessings, comprised of the popular discourses for chanting in *Pāli*, with their translations in the vernacular, and **Mahajayamangala Gatha** among other works.[293] These books were printed in Calcutta, India and

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[287] Lacoul had compiled all this publication under the name of "Buddha dharma wa Nepal Bhāsā Muna".

[288] Lacoul, N.S. 1092, op. cit., p. (8)-(10).

[289] For introduced pure Buddhist view for Nepalese, which is published in his 1st issue publication of Buddha Dharma wa Nepal Bhāsā.

[290] Sigalovada Sutta was translated in order to use as regulation for newly found organization for the revival of Buddhism in Nepal (*Buddha Dharma Uddar Sangha*) and Jivaka Sutta for the rules being good Buddhist devotees.

[291] Phra Sugandha, 2005, op. cit., p. 3.

[292] Venerable *Dhammāloka*, op. cit., p. 89.

[293] R. B. Bandya, Venerable Pragyananda Mahāsthavir, 1978, op. cit., p. 62.

secretly brought into Nepal. Most were brought to Kindol Vihāra. After five busy years of publications by Venerable *Dhammāloka*, Venerable *Amritānanda* took over the job of publication in 1942. Venerable *Amritānanda* was told by Venerable *Dhammāloka* to write down his sermons and to publish Buddhist *Pāli* discourses in Newāri. Within three years, from 1944-1947, Venerable *Amritānanda* published four books:[294] the complete version of the **Dhammapada**, including a new translation into the vernacular, **Girhi Vinaya**, **Triratna Vandana**, and **Pathya Sutra**. Bhikkhu Aniruddha Mahathera published a complete version of the *Dhammacakkappavatana Sutta* with text and translation. Such work continued and Buddhist Suttas, the Abhidhamma, etc., followed in due course, responding to the needs felt by the Buddhists of Nepal.[295] Most of these publications were in Newāri until 1969, when Venerable *Amritānanda* founded The Ananda Kuti Vihāra Trust at Ananda Kuti Vihāra, had began to publish translations of *Pāli* texts into Nepali, officially the national language of Nepal. The Trust published more than 40 books, including all the works translated from *Pāli*, within decades of its establishment. The Dharmodaya Sabhā, founded in 1944, also published a series of more than 180 titles by 1951, which would serve as a valuable nucleus for a modern literary revival in Nepal.[296] Mr. Sucitra Man Sakya, a Secretary of the Dharmodaya Sabhā:

> Theravāda Buddhism has not only developed Nepal bhāsā literature but it has helped to create an awareness of the importance of education along with providing basic education at its monasteries for Nepalese communities.

Dr. Laksman Sakya, a professor of Buddhist studies at Tribhuvan University in Nepal says,

> Looking back three decades, it was very rare for people to know about literature, especially Buddhist literature such as the Tipitaka and so forth. Presently, there are hundreds of Buddhist books available, parts of the Tipitaka, Atthakatha, Tika, and other works. Theravāda monks and nuns as well as laypersons continue to publish new material--both individuals and organizations.

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[294] See Ria Kloppenborg, "Theravāda Buddhism in Nepal", op. cit.; N. B. Bajracharya, **Amritnanjali**, op. cit., pp. 134-135.

[295] Bhikkhu Bodhigyan, **Buddhist Literature in Nepal Bhāsā,** (Kathmandu: PGD in Buddhist Studies, Tribhuwan University, 2056), p. 4.

[296] N. B. Bajracharya, op. cit., p. 137.

Nearly half a century into the revival of Theravāda Buddhism in Nepal, Theravādins, led by Venerable *Sudarshan* Mahāsthavir, embarked upon translating the Tipitaka into Nepal Bhāsā. Sadly, Venerable *Sudarshan* Mahāsthavir was not able to see the project through to completion as he passed away peacefully on 21 July 2002. This project focused on translating the Sutta Pitaka and most of that has been completed and published.[297]

We see then, that Theravādins, both ordained and lay, made significant contributions to raising awareness of literature and to the creation of literature, especially on Buddhism. They used different means of spreading the Buddha's teachings in Nepalese society, for example, giving Dhamma talks and writing and publishing Buddhist books. These talks and publications are mostly in Nepal Bhāsā, which helped to make these precious teachings accessible even among the villagers. These constitute a significant contribution to Buddhism and literature, which must not be forgotten. Because of their contributions various organizations and institutions deserve merit, titles, respect, rewards, and praise for their dedicated effort in the development of Buddhism and Nepalese literature. The Nepal Bhāsā Association has given praise and awards to the Theravādins recognizing their dedication and contributions to Buddhist literature in Nepal Bhāsā. In the same way, some were honoured with titles from foreign countries like Myanmar, Sri Lanka and Thailand. The chart blow lists some leading figures of Theravāda Buddhism and the titles that they were given for their dedication and contribution to Buddhism and literature.[298]

Titles Awarded to Theravādins			
Name	**Title awarded**	**Country**	**Year**
1) Venerable *Pragyānanda*	1. Aggamahapandita 2. Bhāsā Java	Myanmar Nepal	1991 1963
2) Venerable *Shākyānanda*	Aggamahasaddhamma Jotika Dhaja	Myanmar	1997
3) Bhikshu Aniruddha			
Titles: 1. Aggamahasaddhamma Jotika Dhaja 2. Buddha JanmaBhumi Jotaka Sasana Kirti Shri		Myanmar Sri Lanka	1998 1995
4) Bhikshu *Amritānanda*			

[297] Venerable Bodhigyana, op.cit., pp. 10ff; op. cit., Bhikkhu Nyanpurnika (Tr.), pp. i-vi (Bhumika).

[298] Ibid.

Titles: 1. Bhāsā Java 2. Nepal Sasanogahana Sobhana Siri Dhamma-rakkhita Vamsalankara 3. Gagen 4. Gorkha Dakshina Bahu 5. Sahitya Cakravarti (D. Lit.) 6. Vidyavaridhi 7. Tripitaka Visharada Sasana Jotaka 8. Sri Dharmarakshita Vamshalankara Dharmakirti 9. Doctorate		Nepal Sri Lanka Mongolia Nepal Sri Lanka India Sri Lanka Sri Lanka Thailand	1962 1955 1959 1968 1978 1979 1984 1984 1988
5) Venerable Buddhaghosa	Aggamahasaddhama Jotika Dhaja	Myanmar	1999
6) Venerable Mahanama	Bhāsā Thuva	Nepal	1995
7) Venerable Ashwaghosa	Aggamahasaddhamma Jotika Dhaja	Myanmar	2000
8) Venerable Kumar Kasyapa͂			
Title: 1. Vidyalankara Padmabhushan 2. Maha Saddhama Pariyatti Pradeep 3. Aggamaha Saddhamma Jotika Dhaja		Sri Lanka India Myanmar	2001 1955
9) Venerable *Nyānapurnika*			
Title: 1. Aggamahasaddhama Jotika Dhaja 2. Shrestha Sirapa 3. Kammatthanacariya		Myanmar Nepal Myanmar	2001 1970
10) Venerable *Sudarshan*			
Titles: 1. Sahitya Ratna 2. Gorkha Dakshina Bahu 3. Shrestha Sirapa		Nepal Nepal Nepal	 1958
11) *Anāgārikā Dhammāvati*			
Titles: 1. Aggamahasaddhama Gantha Vachaka Pandita 2. Bhāsā Thuva		Myanmar Nepal	1992 1999

Venerable Kondannya, a Secretary of the All Nepal Bhikkhu Association says:

> Such great recognition given to them has been invaluable for the development of Buddhism and Nepalese literature. Their creative work has also been significant for the development and extension

> of Buddhism and its literature, which are mostly in Nepal Bhāsā.[299]

Since then, Buddhist monasteries have become centres of Dhamma discussions and teaching. Literature is published as instructions of how to practice for those who come to the monastery. The publication of books is understood as acts of merit-making, in accordance with the Buddhist belief that giving knowledge is one of the greatest forms of generosity (*sabba dānam dhamma dānam jināti*). Books are published on different occasions and distributed free as acts of making merit. In the *vihāras*, books are published memorialising deceased relatives, recounting their importance and contributions and wishing them to be in good state and to realize *Nibbāna*. Books are being dedicated to them, published, and distributed as a mark of generosity. Books are also published on special days like New Years and *Baisakha Puja* Day. These publications help the people to improve their reading skills. The Nepal Bauddha Pariyatti Shiksya is another factor that promoted the creation of Nepalese literature in both Nepali and Nepal Bhāsā. Nepal Bhāsā has become the basis of this education but the examination is allowed in Nepali. Therefore, all the course books are printed in both languages. *Pariyatti* education has not only spurred growth in the publication of books but has also introduced literature on a wider scale and encouraged growth in the sales and distribution of books. Textbooks were made available to a great extent in Nepali and Nepal Bhāsā.[300] These facts indicate the impact and contribution of Theravāda Buddhism to Nepalese literature.

These facts indicate that the creations of Nepalese literature have been profoundly influenced by the revival of Theravāda Buddhism. Theravādins also play an important role in the development of literature, especially in Nepal Bhāsā. The awareness and publication of Nepal Bhāsā and of Nepali, the national language, are elaborated in the next section.

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[299] Sukhi Hotu Desk, A **Short Auto Biography at A Glance**, 2001, op. cit., p. 27.

[300] Bhiksu Buddhaghosa, **Nepal Baudha Pariyatti Siksaya Samksipt Paricayatmak Itihans,** (Lalitpur: Nepal Bauddha Pariyatti Samiti, N.S. 1087), p. 5.

4.2. Theravāda Buddhist Journals

Gorkhapatra is the oldest newspaper in Nepal, having first gone to press in 1901. On the hundredth anniversary of **Gorkhapatra's** first issue, **The Sunday Dispatch Weekly Newspaper** wrote:[301]

> This Saturday, on the 24th of Baisakha, **Gorkhapatra** is entering into hundred years of its publication. It was on this day in 1958 BS (1901 C.E.) that **Gorkhapatra**, the oldest newspaper in the country, started its publication during the reign of the then Prime Minister Dev Shumsher.

The **Sunday Dispatch** further wrote:

> The main objective of publishing the **Gorkhapatra** was to provide government notices to the people, the establishment of a newspaper was a revolution in the direction of dissemination of information in the country, which otherwise was virtually closed from the outside world.

The **Gorkhapatra** was published weekly in the beginning but there were periods when it was not published because political instability. However, after the overthrow of the *Rānā* regime in 1951 it was converted to a daily and remains so today.

The publication of magazines in Nepal Bhāsā originated 1909 with the publication of the Newāri language monthly **Sudha Sagar**. Later, **Madhavi**, **Sakti Sudha**, and other magazines[302] were published from different locations in India. These Nepal Bhāsā magazines were mostly focused on Buddhist issues. Buddhist magazines issued at different times contributed greatly to the process of bringing Buddhist literature to its present status. **Buddhadharma** Nepal's, first Buddhist magazine, was first published in Calcutta by Dharmaditya Dahrmacharya in 1925.

Buddhadharma was the first magazine dedicated to the pure concept of Buddhist teaching. *Dharmāditya Dharmācārya* with other

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[301] Editorial, **Sunday Dispatch Weekly Newspaper**, Vol. X, No. 49, April 30-May 06, 2000.

[302] Bhikkhu Bodhigyana, **Buddhist literature in Nepal Bhāsā,** op. cit., pp. 20ff.

youths who had travelled to India for the study and business were greatly influenced by the Indian linguistic literary revival. Later, Dharmaditya Dharmacarya changed the name of **Buddhadharma** to **Buddhadharma wa Nepal Bhāsā** recognizing that it was part of the Nepal Bhāsā revival. That was in the time of the isolationist *Rānā* regime, that did like the people to be educated and when printing presses were suppressed in Nepal. Publishing these journals was very risky and the publishers faced many difficulties. Venerable Bodhigyana writes in his book **Buddhist Literature in Nepal Bhāsā** about the difficulties of publication:[303]

> During those days, political conditions within Nepal were unfavourable to these pioneer magazines and, as a result, they had to be published in India at first. Several magazines also had to be written by hand, a slow a labour-intensive task. Thus, although they were able to bring about a literary momentum, the role they played in the revival of Nepal Bhāsā was very gradual. The first Nepal Bhāsā Buddhist magazines dedicated to the mother tongue were "Buddha Dharma" and "Dharmodaya".

After five years, for financial and other reasons, *Dharmāditya Dharmācārya* was forced to end publication. Within five years beginning in 1930 he had published 19 volumes of 10 issues each. The publication had a tremendous impact on the movement for the revival of Theravāda Buddhism and of the Nepal Bhāsā language. After a gap of a decade **Dharmaduta** magazine was first published in 1941, and the **Dharmodaya** Buddhist journal came out in 1947. In 1956, *Sāmanera Sudarshan* published a four-paged **Swanyapunhi** special issue for the Vesak Day celebrations. This was also in the Nepal Bhāsā language. The trend of publishing special Buddhist supplements in Nepali, Nepal Bhāsā, and English, funded through advertisement developed continuously. Although these publications eventually folded for lack of financing, they made a large impact and contributed to the awareness and real love of the native language and the revival of Theravāda Buddhism in Nepal. These magazines were the first public magazines to be published by non-governmental organizations in modern Nepal and made significant contributions to the growth of journalism in Nepal. The **Dharmodaya** Buddhist magazine played a significant role in raising the awareness of the importance of education, especially Buddhist education, for Nepalese

[303] Ibid.

society, which was one of the objectives of the Dharmodaya Sabhā, Nepal's oldest Buddhist organization.

After the establishment of the All Nepal Bhikkhu Association and Bauddha Pariyatti Education in Nepal, many monks and nuns became involved in various social activities. In order to disseminate information about their activities they published leaflets, pamphlets, newsletters, and magazines. Bauddha Pariyatti Sikkhā publishes the **Pariyatti Bulletin** every three months in order to report on education and other news. The Sangharama Bhikkhu Training Centre has published **Sangharama**, an annual magazine, since its founding. **The Santi Sandesh**, an annual Buddhist magazine has been published by Vishwa Shanti Vihāra and Vishwa Shanti Bauddha Sikkhālaya since 1998. Venerable Sobhita from Gana Maha Vihāra has published **Subhasita**, a monthly newsletter, since 2005, reporting on activities of the Dharma Vijaya Padanam Foundation, which he founded. Recently, Venerable Sangharakshita has been publishing **Satyasandesh,** a monthly newspaper in Nepal Bhāsā. He is also editor of **Triratna Kirti**, a monthly newspaper on the Nepal Bhāsā language published at Kirtipur Triratna Kirti Vihāra since 2005. **Satyasandesh** is known as the Nepal's first Buddhist newspaper. There are numerous other Buddhist periodicals, published in Nepali, Nepal Bhāsā, and English by various Buddhist organizations and monasteries. For the most part, these publications are published on the occasions of *Buddha Jayanti* and New Years' Day.[304] All in all, **Buddhadharma**, **Dharmaduta**, **Dharmodaya**, **Ananda Bhumi** and **Dharmakirti** are the most notable Buddhist magazines to have been published in Nepal.

Magazines have been scarce and irregularly published. In 1959 the publication of Dharmodaya Sabhā, which began in 1947, was closed. After decades, **Ananda Bhumi** was brought out by the Ananda Kuti Vihāra Trust under the leadership of Venerable *Amritānanda*. Issued every full-moon day, it is known as the oldest Theravāda Buddhist magazine in Nepal. The Dharmakirti Vihāra publishes **Dharmakirti**. Initially issued once a year on Vesak Day, Dharmakirti was later published every six months, and eventual took its present form as a monthly.[305] The **Ananda Bhumi** and **Dharmakirti**, monthly magazines include community news and articles for the edification of Buddhist

[304] Phra Vipassi, op. cit., p. 107.
[305] Ria Kloppenburg, op. cit., p. 316.

readers, as well as community news in Nepali, Newāri, and, occasionally, in English.

A. BUDDHA DHARMA (1925 –1930 C.E.)

Dharmāditya Dharmācārya began publishing the magazine **Buddhadharma** in India in 1925 when Chandra Samshera was Prime Minister of Nepal. This was not just a time of religious revival; the British were also introducing compulsory examination papers in the vernacular to Indian universities.[306] *Dharmāditya Dharmācārya* was persuaded to publish a joint Buddhist and literary magazine in Nepal Bhāsā. As such, he was the first to introduce journalism in Nepal Bhāsā. **Buddhadharma** magazine began a linguistic literary revolution, evoking mass participation in spreading Buddhism. As reported in chapter one, Dharmaditya Dharmacarya himself was the editor, manager and publisher.

He changed the magazine from its purely religious focus to include also the promotion of literature, renaming it **Buddhadharma Nepal Bhāsā**. The name change helped to avoid Government notice and censure by the *Rānā* regime. Instead of just religious articles and news, he included literary articles on language and other topics. Dharmaditya's efforts were key to the revival of Buddhism in Nepal, using Nepal Bhāsā to popularise Buddhism. Dharmaditya published the magazine for five years. It was revived and kept it in publication by others, for example, Prithvi Manandar, Vaikuntha Prasad Shrestha, Indu Malla, Harikrishna, Phatte Bahādur, Chittadhar, Tulsi Mehar, and Siddhi Ratna.[307] The chart below shows the details of these publications.

Buddhadharma Journal			
No.	Name	Vol.	Year
First year 1925			
1.	Buddhadharma	1	*Baisakha* purnima
2.	Buddhadharma	2-4	Jesth, Ashad and Srawan
Second year 1926			
3.	Buddhadharma Nepal	1-2	Baisaka, Jesth

[306] Lacoul, **Buddhadharma Muna,** 2001, op. cit., p. 15; Sarah LeVine & David N. Gellner, 2006, op. cit., Ch. 2.

[307] Prem Shanti Tuladhar, 1120 NS, op. cit., p. 120.

	Bhāsā		
Third year 1927-1928			
4.	Buddhadharma wa Nepal bhāsā	1-2	Baisak- Jestha and Asad-Srawan
5.	Buddhadharma Nepal Bhāsā	3-4	Bhadra-Asbin & Kartik- Marga
6.	Buddhadharma wa Nepal bhāsā	5-6	Paush-Marga & Phalgun- Chaitra
Fourth year 1929			
7.	Buddhadharma wa Nepal bhāsā	1-2	Kartik & Marga
Fifth year 1929			
8.	Buddhadharma wa Nepal bhāsā	1	Srawan Purnima
9.	Buddhadharma wa Nepal bhāsā	2-3	Bhadra-Asvin Purnima
10.	Buddhadharma wa Nepal bhāsā	4-5	Kartik & Mansir Purnima

B. *DHARMADUTA (1941-1948)*

Anāgārikā Dhammpala of Sri Lanka (1864-1933) published the monthly magazine **Mahābodhi** in English and later some Hindi. It had had an important impact and influenced many, particularly the Nepalese Theravāda revivalists. The magazine **Dharmaduta** was formed. First publishing in Hindi, it later switched to primarily Nepal Bhāsā. The first issue was published by the Mahābodhi Society of Sāranātha in 1935, 23 years after the establishment of the Mahābodhi Society. Venerable Mahanama, a Nepalese monk was the editor of this magazine for many years.[308]

The study of **Dharmaduta** is indispensable to the study of Theravāda Buddhism in Nepal. **Dharmaduta** published 127 articles by 36 Nepal Bhāsā writers. The main writers were Nepalese Buddhist revivalists, for example, Venerable *Amritānanda*, Bhikshu Sakyananda, Bhikshu Subhodānanda, Moti Laxmi Upasika, and Bhuval Lal Pradhan.[309]

[308] Chandraman Vajracarya, **Bhikshu Mahanama Kovida Mhasika,** (Kathmandu: Nepalbhāsā Academy, 1996), p. 9-12; Phra Vipassi, op. cit., p. 107.

[309] Bhikkhu Bodhigyan, NS 1119, op. cit., p. 80.

Dhammaduta strongly emphasized the enhancement of Buddhist religious literature in Nepal Bhāsā. It helped to spread Theravāda Buddhist views both inside and outside the country. Moreover, it reported the Buddhist situation in Nepal to the world, and introduced Nepal Bhāsā as well. Thus, the wave of Buddhism and literary activities advanced without any pause until the establishment of Dharmodaya Sabhā in 1944.

C. DHARMODAYA (1947-1960)

After the establishment of the Dharmodaya Sabhā in 1944, another Buddhist periodical, **Dharmodaya**, was published in Calcutta as one of the first objectives of the Sabhā. It dealt entirely with Buddhism and Nepal Bhāsā literature. Bhikshu Aniruddha and Bhikshu Mahanama Kovida were the editors, and the first issue was published with the financial support of former Newār Merchants of Lhasa in 1947. It was published as a monthly magazine. Venerable Bodhigyana writes about the **Dharmodaya** magazine in his **Buddhist Literature in Nepal Bhāsā**:[310]

> Though the magazine directly demonstrated its main aim as the publicity of literature, Dharma and Education, it was also turned to the task of making writers reform their language. Articles were published about different useful matters along with the philosophy of Buddhism.

As reported in Chapter two, the publication of **Dharmodaya** initiated a new era in Buddhist literature. Most of the writers were Buddhist monks, for example, Venerable *Amritānanda*, Venerable Subodhananda, Venerable Aniruddha, Venerable Ashwaghosa, and Venerable Sudarsha. Some were lay, such as Ratna Dhwaja Joshi, Chittadhar Hridaya and Hem Lal Joshi. The publication was widely responded to by the people of Nepal and had a significant religious and literary impact on Nepalese society. Its contributions were achieved more than any other magazine in popularising Buddhism during the *Rānā* Regime. When Dharmodaya Sabhā shifted its centre to Kalimpong, **Dharmodaya** magazine moved as well. **Dharmodaya** folded in 1958, after 13 years, for lack of financial support.[311]

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[310] Ibid.
[311] Phra Vipassi. op. cit., P. 107.

D. ANANDA BHUMI (1972 to the present)

In 1972, Venerable *Amritānanda* formed the Ananda Kuti Vihāra Guthi (Ananda Kuti Vihāra Trust), a foundation for the conservation of the Vihāra, providing food and lodging for the monks, and publishing Theravāda Buddhist literature in Nepal. The following year, in 1973, on the full-moon day of *Baisakha*, **Ananda Bhumi** was inaugurated in order to support and carry out the programmes of the Trust. It published the first issue of **Ananda Bhumi**, the first Buddhist monthly to be published in Nepal. It had 14 pages and the articles were in both Nepali and Nepal Bhāsā. In the beginning, the price was five Paisa (100 Paisa=1 Rupee) for one copy and five Rupees for a year's subscription.

Ananda Bhumi enjoyed a big response from the people of Nepal and gradually, it grew to have many pages and articles that were more effective and academic. It reports Buddhist news and activities throughout country. The Trust provides training courses on how to write articles to the young and holds writing competitions and the like, in order to provide academic and useful articles on Buddhism for the betterment of society.

Ananda Bhumi has continued in circulation until today. However, publication nearly folded a few years ago due to management problems within the Ananda Kuti Vihāra Trust. Sukhi Hotu Nepal, a group of young Nepalese Buddhists took responsibility for the magazine and kept it in circulation, thus initiating a new era for Nepal's oldest monthly Buddhist magazine. Sukhi Hotu Nepal published with a new shape with the cover in colour, and making it more interesting and attractive to the readers. Since then, it has published many academic articles in three languages, Newāri, Nepali, and English. It was well-organized and included interesting articles, generating awareness and faith in Buddhism among the common people. Sukhi Hotu Nepal maintained the magazine for three years and in 2005 returned it to the Ananda Kuti Vihāra Trust at the Trust's request. It is once again published by Ananda Kuti Vihāra Trust, its place of origin.[312]

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[312] Bhikkhu Ashwaghosa, "Anandabhumi", **Ananda Bhumi**, (Kathmandu: Ananda Kuti Vihāra) Year 1, Vol. 1., 2517 BE.

E. DHARMAKIRTI (1972-present)

After **Ananda Bhumi**, had gone into publication, the Dharmakirti Buddhist Study Circle of Dharmakirti Vihāra began publishing a Buddhist magazine, **Dharmakirti**, the first issue coming out on the auspicious occasion of *Baisakh Purnima* of 1972.[313]

In 1971 with the help of Venerable Ashwaghosa, Bhante *Dhammāvati* started the Buddhist Study Circle (Bauddha Adhyayan Gosthi). Nuns were widely involved in giving dhamma talks and many devotees came to participate, to listen to a wide range of speakers, and to read and discuss texts. Starting in 1972, the Circle issued a magazine entitled **Dharmakirti**, with Venerable Ashwaghosa as editor. Venerable Ashwaghosa was the first and long-time editor **Ananda Bhumi**.[314] Until 1990, **Dharmakirti** was published annually on Vesak Day and sold for one rupee. After 1990 it was published twice yearly. In the beginning it was filled with Buddhist philosophy, stories, and other interesting articles. A few years later, in 1985 (2042 B.S.), it began coming out monthly. It continues to be published monthly. The magazine seems less academic and interesting than previously, focusing on the activities Dharmakirti Vihāra with less attention given to Buddhist activities in general. However, it has contributed to the spread and development of Buddhist ideas in the society. It especially supports women writers and publishes their contributions. Venerable Bodhigyana writes in his **Buddhist Literature in Nepal Bhāsā**:[315]

> The **Dharmakirti** magazine has been functioning continuously under the management of *Anāgārikā Dhammāvati* and the editorship of Venerable Bhikshu Ashwaghosa Mahasthavira. In addition, all the Dharma devotees are working for this magazine in order to spread the Buddha's teachings in the same way as Ananda Bhumi. It supports contributions from female authors and as a result, it has produced many writers. Now it is circulated all over the country both in Nepali and Newāri languages.

[313] Sangharaksita, op. cit., p. 83.
[314] Sarah E. LeVine, 2001, op. cit., p. 136-137.
[315] Venerable Bodhigyana. op. cit., p. 25.

4.3. Education

Every society has its own system of giving instructions for knowledge and the better life. That is, education. Education aims to impart general knowledge as a good foundation for the future and for a better life. In Nepal, due to under-development and the mountainous terrain, the progress of education has been slow in the countryside and small villages. The 60% illiteracy rate is uncomfortably high.

There are four kinds of education in our present world, primary, secondary, higher, and fundamental education. However, in general there are two kinds of education, spiritual and customary.[316] Customary education is study for survival in the present or material life, while spiritual education is for the happiness in the present and the hereafter. In the context of modern Nepal, both types of education were introduced a century ago and have been widely practiced since the overthrow of the *Rānā* aristocracy in 1951. In that way, Theravāda Buddhism had a significant influence on both formal and informal education. Schools were established and operated by Buddhist monks. There are also informal Buddhist teachings given by monks in the monasteries. Today, both formal and informal Buddhist education is available in Nepal.

Nepalese society is greatly influenced by Hinduism, and females were not allowed to study or only rarely had the opportunity to study. A woman’s role was only to serve her husband and family, anything else, including education, has been discouraged According to the traditional Hindu law book, the *Manudhammasastra* or *Manusmriti*, females are lesser beings than men, and mustn’t read the scriptures. Their status is lower than that of the scheduled castes. Therefore, the women of Nepal suffer from the denial of freedom. When Theravāda Buddhism was reintroduced, Buddhist education was offered in all in the monasteries. Many people took the classes, but most were women. There are many nuns in present-day Nepal who were educated in the monasteries. In other words, almost all the senior nuns received their basic education in the Buddhist monasteries from Buddhist monks. This was a significant contribution of Buddhist monks, providing education to women. An awareness of the importance of education among women grew rapidly.

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[316] Venerable Pannamurti, 2005, op. cit., p. 28.

Anāgārikā Mudhita, of Pranidhi Purna Mahavihara, Balambu was ordained at a young age and went to study in Sri Lanka. After several years of study, she returned and conducts various activities at the monastery. She expresses her gratitude towards Theravāda Buddhism and the monks. She says that she was very fortunate know Buddhism and to have the opportunity to enter a Buddhist monastery. If she had not entered the monastery, she would have had no opportunity to learn how to read and write. She received her basic education at the monastery from the Buddhist monks, and her higher education from Sri Lanka. *Anāgārikā* Chandrasila, also of Pranidhi Purna Mahavihara, Balambu, ordained with *Anāgārikā* Mudhita but trained in Thailand. Her case is similar. Both of them had passed the *Kovid* the highest level of Buddhist education in Nepal and are helping to propagate Buddhism by teaching and giving Dhamma talks at various locations.

In another case, in Kirtipur, *Anāgārikā* Meena received her basic education at the monastery from Buddhist monks. She voluntarily served the monks and helped with *vihāra* activities for a long time while studying Buddhist literature. Later, she had the opportunity of visiting Thailand, and she stayed for some years, where she ordained as a Theravāda nun, and studied Buddhism in the Thai tradition. Six years ago she passed the *Kovid* and has been helping at Sri Kirti Vihāra, Kirtipur. Her feeling is that "Buddhism gave a lot, the chance to learn, read, visit many different places, and to have good experiences. If I had not come to the monastery I might be not able to read and write today."

These are just a few of those who received their educations at the monasteries, where they were taught by Buddhist monks, and who later became nuns and went for further study. There are many other women who proud and glad to say, "I am Buddhist and Buddhism gave me a great deal." At Pranidhi Purna Mahavihara in Balambu I met many women, such as Ganesh, Sil Sobha, Cunti, Heramaya, Laxmisobha. They all received their basic educations from Buddhist monks at the Vihāra. They received no education from the State. Most of them now assist with Buddhist activities. Some are married and some are not but are supporting and educating others. I was impressed by their motivation to study Buddhism and to further those studies. This is one example from a Buddhist monastery of the significant impact on women's awareness of freedom and education. There are more than 50 Buddhist monasteries in the valley and all the monasteries carry out such activities. This

contribution made by Buddhist monks is unique and unforgettable in modern society. The nuns should proud and have gratitude for Theravāda Buddhism and monks. Theravāda Buddhist monks took serious risks in raising these women up from domination by Hindu customs and in giving them educations. Theravāda monks send those women who are eager to learn more to India and Myanmar for further education. Therefore, Theravāda Buddhist monks in modern Nepal introduced awareness of female freedom and education. The revival of Theravāda has had a great impact on the women who became nuns.

In the context of formal Buddhist education, if we look at the history of Buddhist education in Nepal will find that formal education was introduced with monastic education. In 1951 Venerable *Amritānanda* went to visit China and Mongolia. On the way back he was offered an amount of money with which to establish a Buddhist school in Nepal. In 1952 under the supervision of Venerable *Amritānanda*, Ananda Kuti Vidyapeeth, a Buddhist high school, in Kathmandu was founded.[317] Monks like Venerable *Kumar Kāshyapa*, Venerable Ashwaghosa, Venerable Buddhaghosha, and Venerable *Sudarshan* were the teachers. The school succeeded in developing strong Buddhist believers. For a variety of reasons it is now under the control of the laity. It is still in operation, but has become commercial, and is no longer a Buddhist institute. There are still former students who remember training at Vidyapeeth School. Its influence on them continues today, and they are looking for similar institutes for their children. Venerable *Amritānanda* not only established the high school but also established the Ananda Kuti Science College in 1965. But it folded due to financial problems and the political situation.[318]

Buddhist schools and colleges have been established at various times by various individuals. One of those individuals was Venerable Sumangala, who introduced the Kindergarten Nursery School, Language Centre, Education for the Aged, and other training courses at the Buddhist monastery. In the seventies Venerable Sumangala started the Buddhist Saturday School at Gana Mahavihara. It was very successful and by far the most popular. Later, he went to Japan for further study, and the school was supervised by *Anāgārikā Dhammāvati* who shifted it to Dharmakirti. Sarah LeVine writes that children who were hanging around

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[317] N. B. Bajracharya, Amritanjali, op. cit., p. 195.
[318] Ibit., N. B. Bajracharya, p. 199.

in courtyards were taken to the school.[319] This education centre was widely attended, as there were no schools for poor families at that time. Neither was there work, nor did the children just play most of time. After his return from Japan, seeing the success of such efforts, Venerable Sumangala re-established the Kindergarten naming it Siddhartha Sisu Niketan at Gana Mahavihara. Later, the school was moved to Buddha Vihāra, which was build by Venerable Sumangala, where it has remained. This Siddhartha Sisu Niketan is still operating successfully today[320] but, like the Ananda Kuti Vidyapeeth, it is now operated by the laity. Moreover, Venerable Sumangala started a language centre and education for the aged at Buddha Vihāra. These were very popular but due to lack of financial support and volunteers they folded after a few years.

In 1991, Venerable Sunanda established the Siddhartha University,[321] a pioneering missionary work. It was established in a non-Buddhist country, in Washington, D.C., USA. Its purposes were to create a place of study and research and to provide humanities and Buddhist studies programmes for academicians, practitioners, and students from throughout the world, offering both residential and correspondence study programmes. Nevertheless, due the fact that the founder was Nepalese and for other reasons, Venerable Sunanda returned to Nepal and the idea of the University also moved to Nepal. Presently, its main office is at Sakyashinga Vihāra, Lalitpur, and has a large plot of land under development outside of Kathmandu. In addition, the Government recently signed for the establishment of Lumbini International Buddhist University, but a great deal of planning is still required for that project. Tribhuvan University has offered the Post Graduate Diploma and the Master of Arts in Buddhist studies since nearly a decade ago. A Buddhist monk named Venerable Ananda is giving lectures after the death of Venerable *Sudarshan* Mahāsthavir.

In addition to these, the monks and nuns have established schools with essentially secular curricula but that include Buddhist subjects. Sri Yasodhara Bauddha Madyamika Vidyalaya School, in Thaina, Lalitpur, was founded by *Anāgārikā* Madhavi and the Triple Gem

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[319] Sarah LeVine, op. cit., p. 134.

[320] Bhikkhu Sugandha, **An Obituary Venerable Sumangala Mahāsthavir: A monk who modernized Buddhism in Nepal**, Venerable Kondannya (ed.), Sumangala Mahathero Commemorative Volume, (Kathmandu: Buddha Vihāra, 2000), p. 27.

[321] Harishchandra Lal Singh, "Siddhartha University", **Ananda Bhumi**, Vol. 20, No., 5, 1992, pp. 16-19.

boarding school at Swayambhu, was founded under the leadership of Venerable Kondannya (Darjaling) with two lay people and is still operated by them. Both schools include three Buddhist subjects as moral education. In addition to this, *pariyatti* education is offered both formally and informally in Nepal, especially in Kathmandu Valley. *Pariyatti* degree holders play important roles in both official and non-official organizations. High-ranking State officials have participated in *pariyatti* educational activities like the quiz competitions and convocations, and in that sense it can be called formal. Nevertheless *pariyatti* education is not recognized by the Government.[322]

A. Pariyatti Education in Nepal

The Nepal Bauddha Pariyatti or Saturday Buddhist School at Buddhist monasteries generates motivation, education and Buddhist morality in the society. Buddhist education motivates young people of society to cultivate a sense of discipline and moral value. It helps them to understand moral values in the society. Therefore, monks and nuns are involved in order to provide Buddhist moral education in the modern society, mainly to the young ages. Venerable Pannamurti has recently done research work on this subject for his M.A. in Buddhist studies and submitted it to Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, Bangkok, Thailand.

Buddhist education has traditionally been categorized as *pariyatti*, *patipatti* and *pativeda* or study, practice and realization. *Pariyatti* is the theoretical aspect of the religion, concerned with the study, teaching, and dissemination of the words of the Buddha, as collected in the Tipitaka, in other words *pariyatti* is study of the text and scriptures.[323] *Patipatti* is the experiential aspect of the teachings: putting them into practice in our lives, the practical aspect of the true doctrine.[324] *Pativeda* then refers to the fruit of the practice: realizing for oneself the truth of the Buddha's teachings.[325] *Pariyatti* is the basis for *patipatti* and *pativeda* Dhamma, hence the importance of the Sanghayana Buddhist Conferences that have been held to preserve the words of the Buddha as *pariyatti*.

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[322] Venerable Pannamurti, op. cit., p. 78.

[323] P.A. Payutto, **Dictionary of Buddhism**, (Mahachulalongkorn University, Bangkok, 2538 BE), p. 125.

[324] Ibid., P.A. Payutto, Dictionary of Buddhism, p. 125.

[325] Ibid., P. A. Payutto, p. 125.

In Nepal, at the beginning of revival of Theravāda Buddhism, there were no facilities to study Buddhism as there were in other Asian countries. Novices, *anāgārikās*, and monks had to visit foreign countries, especially Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Thailand, and India for study. It was not easy to go abroad for further education. So, in order to meet these difficulties, Bhikkhu Buddhaghosha Mahasthavira took the initial steps in establishing Buddhist education in Nepal.[326]

Venerable Buddhaghosha was then residing in Sugatpur Vihāra of Trisuli Bazar, Nuwakot for the 1962 rains-retreat. He was requested to teach Buddhism at the Vihāra by *Anāgārikā* Sushila and Lay devotee Dharma Ratna Sakya of Trisuli. They made arrangements to start teaching *pariyatti*. He succeeded with the programme and a number of students eager to learn Buddhism from around the country contacted Venerable Buddhaghosha. Venerable Buddhaghosha submitted a proposal to the All Nepal Bhikkhu Association, along with the newly framed curriculum, to develop and start *pariyatti* programmes for students. The proposal was approved on 1962 (2019 BS). The programme was called the Nepal Bauddha Pariyatti Shiksha.[327]

Later, after three successful years of the programme, the curriculum was extended from a five-year course to a ten-year course classified into *prarambhika, pravesh, and pariyatti saddhamma upadhi* and *pariyatti saddhamma kovid.*

Level of Pariyatti Education		
Stages	**Level**	**Duration**
1st	Primary Level (Prarambhika)	Three years
2nd	Saddhamma Palaka (Intermediate or Pravesh)	Three Years
3rd	Saddhamma Palaka (Certificate or Upadhi)	One Year
4th	Kovida (Certificate) Kovida	Three years

The five-member Nepal Bauddha Pariyatti Education Committee (NBPEC) has been created as the highest body supervising *pariyatti* education under the rules and regulations provided by ANBM, and to provide the necessary instruction. The regulation provides that the

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326 Mahendraratna Sakya, **Bhikkhu Buddhaghosa Mahsthavir Samchipta Jiwani**, (Kathmandu: Pub. Gyanjyoti Kansakar, 1998 CE), p. 48.

327 Venerable Pannamurti, op. cit., pp. 71-72.

committee can be expanded by two additional members in accordance with community needs, subject to approval by a meeting of ANBM.[328]

1. Rector,
2. Co-Rector
3. Central Controller of Examination
4. Central Co- Controller of Examination
5. Member
6. Member (optional)
7. Member (optional)

Sub committees

a. Curriculum Construction and Textbook Publication committee

b. Teacher Education Committee

c. Management Committee

In addition to the Committee, the Bauddha Pariyatti Education Council has been provided for in the regulations. Under the Rector's supervision, the Council is to carry out *pariyatti* education and to develop it further. The Council consists of 15 members.[329]

ANBM decided to inaugurate this good work on the 64th birth anniversary of Venerable Pragyananada Mahāsthavir, Sangha Mahanayaka of the Mahasangha. As decided at the meeting, the first day of teaching at Nepal Bauddha Pariyatti Sikkhā, was broadcast live over Radio Nepal.[330]

Later in 1964 the All Nepal Bhikkhu Mahasangha revised the programme and Pariyatti Sikkha or Nepal Bauddha Pariyatti Siksa, Buddhist Saturday School, was formed and is now given in most Buddhist monasteries. These classes are also offered in public and private schools, Tibetan monasteries, and other Buddhist centres. The Annual Progress Report of the NBPS of 2005 (2062 BS) submitted by Venerable Bodhigyana, the Central Controller of Examinations, shows that the

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[328] The counstitution of Nepal Baudha Pariyatti Siksya, 2058 BS, Vishwa Shanti Vihāra, Kathmandu, p. 1-8.

[329] Ibid.

[330] Secretarial Report, "The Progress report of NBPS", **Nepal Baudha Pariyatti Sikshya Rajat jayanti Smarika**, Suwarna Sakya Ed., (Kathmandu: NBPS Publication, 1989), p. 51; "Nepal Bauddha Pariyatti Siksya Samchipta Paricaye," **Ananda Bhumi Journal**, vol. 17, no. 12, 1990, p. 22.

number of centres and of students have increased significantly over the last two years.[331]

Student Census				
Location	**2002**	**2003**	**2004**	**2005**
Kathmandu	8	13	11	17
Lalitpur	10	13	12	13
Bhaktapur		1	1	3
Kavre		2	2	2
Lumbini	1	2	2	2
Total Centre	**19**	**32**	**28**	**37**
Total Students	**(1140)**	**(1041)**	**(1502)**	**(1983)**

Comparing this year's to last year's report shows that *pariyatti* education is developing widely and the number of people involved in the programme is increasing. However, the student census reflects only those who attended the examination. Each annual report expresses the difficulties in conducting and supporting the examination, including political instability within the Government. For the last two years the examination was held at Vishwa Shanti Vihāra and many students from many centres were unable to sit the examination because of political instability. According to the annual report of 2005 (2062 B.S.) there were 1983 students who registered for examination, more than in past annual reports. Nevertheless, *Anāgārikā* Sujata told to me in an interview that, "due to the Maoist problem, many States as well as private schools are requesting that Buddhism be taught in school."

This is another indication of progress, and of the significant impact that *pariyatti* education has had on Nepalese society. *Anāgārikā Dhammāvati*, *Anāgārikā* Anupama, and lay devotees have expressed to me their feelings that *pariyatti* students are more kind and reasonable, and that they become less disobedient and arrogant than before. Moreover, the parents found that their children were more helpful and respectful to them. This shows that *pariyatti* education is gaining popularity among both Buddhists and non-Buddhists. "My child became so kind and helpful. We do not need to remind him. Now, He goes to school regularly with out saying anything, and respects everyone," reports one non-Buddhist parent of the influence on his child of *pariyatti* education at Sri Kirti Vihāra, Kirtipur. Venerable *Nyānapurnika* also said in his interview

[331] Information from the NBPS, Vishwa Shanti Vihāra, Head Office.

that the "development of *pariyatti* education in Nepal is the betterment of Nepalese society". The Annual Report which was presented to the board, says:

> The Maoist problem in Nepal has caused the Government to realize the importance of Buddhist education for the new generation and has applied for courses. Many schools have already followed *pariyatti Sikkhā* and teach Buddhism.

The Report also says that, especially in Kathmandu Valley, most of the school are requesting *pariyatti* classes in their schools. So many schools are requesting the classes that there are not enough teachers and the Board cannot meet all the requests. This programme is taught by both ordained and lay Buddhists. One class is given per week, on Saturdays and the examination is given by the head *pariyatti* office. According to *Anāgārikā* Sujata,

> There are very few who complete *Kovid*, the highest level of Pariyatti Sikkhā. Most students do not have enough educational background. Most of them got their education in the *vihāra* and completed the courses. As a result very few can teach. At the same time society is looking to Theravāda to lead for the right development of society.

Looking at these facts, even though *pariyatti* education is not accredited by the Government, it plays a significant role and has a significant impact on Nepalese society. Four decades into this journey, according to the Annual Report of 2005 (2062 BS), 13,643 students had participated in *pariyatti* education. However, only 40 students had completed the entire course.

B. Tipitaka Study

Anāgārikā Sujata began a Tipitaka Study Course at a layperson's home in Khusi Buan last year, 2005.[332] Two one-hour classes are given every Saturday morning. Instruction is organised according to the Nikayas of the Sutta Pitaka, for example, the Digha Nikaya Majjima Nikaya each have three sections. Venerable Dhira Sumedho from Padma

[332] Information from *Anāgārikā* Sujata at her residence.

Sugandha Vihāra, Kathmandu, and Venerable Susheel from Buddha Vihāra, Kathmandu and *Anāgārikā* Sujata teach the classes. The first hour is an explanation of Sutta and second hour is translation of the Sutta directly from the *Pāli*. All the students are lay Buddhists. Four or five monks and eight nuns started the class but they dropped out, according to *Anāgārikā* Sujata. Presently there are about 30 students. After completion of each section of the Nikaya there is an examination. The first section of the Digha Nikaya, the *Silagandha Vagga* has been completed, and they are currently teaching the second section of the Digha Nikaya. This is a beginning to the direct study of the Tipitaka, but support and publicity are needed. The study also will support publication of Buddhist literature along with articles by Buddhist scholars for the development and propagation of Buddhism both inside and outside the country.

C. In the Mass Media

Besides these activities, every Thursday evening at 6:30 the Image Channel television station broadcasts the programme *Buddhadharma*, on which *Anāgārikā* Sujata gives Dhamma talks. Before, *Anāgārikā Dhammāvati* had purchased time on the Image Channel and had started to teach Buddhism. However, since the Maoist uprising, the Image Channel has provided 15 minuets of free airtime. Venerable *Sudarshan* used to broadcast a fifteen-minute Dhamma talk on National television every Friday morning. When Venerable *Sudarshan* developed health problems, Venerable Bodhisena took over the Dhamma talks. Over the years a variety of monks have given Dhamma talks on the programme. Presently, Venerable Ananda, a lecturer at Tribhuvan University is the main presenter. In addition, Venerable Kondannya, *Anāgārikā* Sujata and some other monks and nuns broadcast Dhamma talks on different stations.

On October 24, 1947, for the first time in history, the Buddhist message was broadcast in the Newāri language, by Venerable *Amritānanda* over Calcutta Radio. In his message, besides giving a summary of Buddhism and the Buddhist population of the world, he deplored the condition of Buddhism in Nepal itself, and urged the Buddhists of Nepal to support **Dharmodaya** magazine being published in Newāri in Sarnath, India by the Nepalese monks living in exile.[333]

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[333] N. B. Bajracharya, **Amritanjali**, op. cit., p. 135.

These facts show that Buddhism has had a unique impact on education in Nepal. It has played a significant role in the development of Nepal's educational system, especially in Buddhism. Theravāda Buddhism has taken responsibility for building the awareness and development of education in Nepal. The Theravāda contribution to education in modern Nepal must not be forgotten.

4.4. Social Welfare

"Go forth, O! Bhikkhu, for the good of the many, for the happiness of the many, out of compassion for the world, for the good, benefit and happiness of gods and men,"[334] said the Buddha, and this is a major objective of Buddhism. Monks are responsible to teach and to show the way out of all kinds of suffering, individual, family, social and community problems. "Hoist the flag of the sage; preach the Sublime Dhamma, work for the good of the other." These words of the Buddha encourage monks to be involved in social work, which should be part of Buddhist propagation. Social welfare, then, is another way in which the Theravāda can touch the hearts of the Nepalese society.

Venerable *Sudarshan* said in one of his sermons that Buddhist monks started doing social service in Nepal after the overthrow of the isolationist regime. Moreover, in the field of social welfare, Theravāda organizes free health camps, training centres, and meets other social needs. The benefits of the revival of Theravāda Buddhism in Nepal affected the customs of Nepal, which are mainly adopted from Hinduism. Among the effects, the eradication of the caste system, gender equality, and providing social facilities are taken as the main efforts through which the revival of Theravāda Buddhism has influenced society.

A. Change of Social Caste System

Nepal is the only Hindu nation in the world and Hinduism is widely practiced by the people. Hinduism strongly advocates the caste system, which is derived from *Manudhammasastra*. Not only did Hindus observe caste but Newār Buddhists did as well. Venerable *Sudarshan* says,[335]

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[334] Venerable Nārada, **The Buddha and his Teachings,** 4th ed., (Malaysia: The Buddhist Missionary Society, 1988), p. 108.

[335] Bhikkhu Sudarshan, http://www.Ircnepal.org/papers, op. cit.

> It is known to all that the Buddhist of Nepal have been exploited by compelling them to adopt non-Buddhist faiths and practices by introducing casteism in Buddhism. The very practice of creating hierarchy in Buddhism by giving recognition to Shakyas and Vajracharyas and depriving other Newārs of different castes the recognition is indicative of narrow-mindedness and this is an obstacle for the development of Newār Buddhism.

Nepal practices the caste system widely, but differently from the caste system that we are familiar in the four major castes: Kings, Brahmins, Businessmen and Labourers. In Nepal there are classes and thirty-six castes. The castes are divided according to work and occupation. According to historians, there was no caste system in Nepal until the introduction of Hinduism around the eighth century CE, in the time of King Jayasthiti Malla, who imposed Hindu *Manuvad* law. Among the different castes, the National Ethnic Group Development Committee has identified 61 different groups.

The Newār communities, who are considered the original inhabitants of the valley, dominate Kathmandu Valley. With the revival of Theravāda Buddhism the caste system was greatly affected and after the democracy it was abandoned. One of the scholars from a low caste says in his massage:

> I was expecting that after we had democracy we would not be addressed in a manner like Oh! Khadgi, Oh! Manandhar, Oh! Jyapu, Oh! Chetri and we will be all the same, who are the divisions of four classes and thirty-six castes. They would not have to go to serve as a tenant. And there would be a stage made to perform or demonstrate your skill and talents, to make it better.

The Newārs are specialists in different occupations and still specialists in their profession according to the traditional caste, for example as priests, astrologers, masons, painters, stone workers, bronze workers, copper workers, silver and goldsmiths, carpenters, traders, gardeners, dyers, washermen, tailors, butchers, and sweepers. The Newār caste hierarchy is complicated and twin headed. There were also major religions, Vajracharya Buddhism and Hinduism. When the first Theravāda monk, Venerable Mahapragya, a Hindu by birth was ordained into Buddhism, he was exiled from the country. Later, traditional

Buddhist families effectively took over the Buddhist revival movement. Once, Theravāda gained ground in Nepal, they emphasized the Buddhist theories of equality, simplicity, and freedom to Nepalese society. These ideas affected Nepalese society and changed Buddhism. Among them, the *Khadgi* (*Nay*) (butchers), *Nakarmi* (iron workers), tailors and so on were vastly influenced. Boys from low caste families dominated when the Sangharam Bhikkhu Training Centre organized the first group for ordination. Moreover, the Theravāda movement emphasised equal opportunity for all the community to study Buddhism, which is a part of Buddha's constitution for social development. There are number of places in scripture where casteism is opposed. At a same time, the Theravāda movement encouraged cross-marriages between castes. According to scholars of the Newār ethnic group, Venerable *Sudarshan*, very often gave talks in which he suggested that the exchange of blood that would result from cross-caste marriages might be beneficial to Newār society. Bringing together the various skills and knowledge that were held within the castes, he believed, might produce new ideas and enhance production for the community and for the nation.

The caste system was officially abolished by the 1991 constitution, but casteism is deeply ingrained in the community. However, since Theravāda Buddhism in Nepal has from the beginning been open to all castes and cultures, it has had great influence among the minor or low caste communities of Kathmandu. Before the constitution, low caste communities accepted Theravāda Buddhist an escape from the denial of human rights inherent in their caste status. *Khadgi* (butchers), *Nakarmi* (metal workers), and *Dobi* (washermen) converted in large numbers. Many have ordained as monks and nuns and some of them are leaders of Theravāda activities in various fields, for example *pariyatti* and other Buddhist educational activities such as those of Tribhuvan University. There have been cross-caste marriages since the revival of Theravāda Buddhism in modern Nepal. We see then that, the revival of Theravāda Buddhism in Nepal has promoted human dignity and equality in human relations in the society.

B. Gender Equality

Culturally Hindu, Nepal has traditionally denied freedom and social facilities to women. Theravāda Buddhism is responsible for improving the status of women in Nepal. The revival of Theravāda

Buddhism brought with it the opportunity to raise the status of women, and give them a whiff of freedom from the strictures Hindu custom. Venerable *Amritānanda* suggests that this was a reason for the expulsion of Buddhist monks in 1944.[336]

> In 1944, the Venerable *Pragyānanda* Mahathera tried to ordain a lady as a nun, but the then Prime Minister, Juddha Shumsher JBR summoned all the eight monks living then in Kathmandu and told them not to preach the dhamma. But the Bhikkhu would not agree to it…and ordered them to leave the country within three days.

Sarah LeVine writing about female ordination in Nepal maintains,[337]

> For women, ordination is an act of emancipation rather than 'renunciation' as it is for men. Undoubtedly some adult female recruits "go into homelessness" in order to have more time to meditate and to study Buddhadharma but all are motivated by the urgent desire to escape marriage and motherhood which, despite the fact that women are now entering the professions in considerable numbers, is still widely regarded as the only legitimate adult female role.

Women were socially and legally inferior to men; as nuns they were respected and had greater opportunities for study. Even though a nun is of lower status than a monk in the Buddhist tradition, in the way of practice of Nepal, they are the same to the followers. The followers make no difference between the monks and the nuns. They are as well respected as are to the monks. Some of the nuns are well educated and work for the welfare of Nepalese society. The introduction of the Theravāda, then, was also the introduction of women's upliftment and freedom in the society, as discussed earlier in the section on literature.

Nepal is a poor and underdeveloped country, which means few educational opportunities and social facilities. There were no organizations interested in the idle boys and girls around the courtyard.

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[336] Bhikkhu *Amritānanda*, **A Short History of Theravāda Buddhism in Nepal**, (Kathmandu: Ananda Kuti Vihāra Trust, 1982 CE), p. 4.

[337] Sarah LeVine, 2001. op. cit., p. 288.

There were a few schools, but they were not for the children of the poor. The Theravāda Buddhist movement took and interest, and brought boys and girls from poor families to the *vihāras* and taught them. Many subsequently ordained. They had the opportunity to learn to read and write and to pursue their educations both inside and outside the country.[338] One reason that Nepalese boys took ordination in Buddhism was for the education. Most of the present Buddhist monks in Nepal are examples of this. Now, they are well educated and contributing to the development of Buddhism and society. They are not only pillars of Buddhism and society but are also helping their families. These facts indicate that the Theravāda movement has made significant contributions to gender equality and the upliftment of women in modern Nepal.

C. Theravāda Social Services

Besides social awareness of gender equality the upliftment of women, because Nepal is a poor country, other social needs need to be attended to as well. Among these needs, medicine and education are given priority by all in the community. The Theravādins of Nepal started from these points. Venerable Sumangala Mahāsthavir[339] initiated different social activities, for example, travel, free health check-ups, and a free clinic at Buddha Vihāra, the Learning Centre for the Aged, and Kindergartens. Similarly, other monks such as Venerable *Sudarshan* Mahāsthavir, Abbot of Sri Kirti Vihāra, Prof. at Tribhuvan University, Venerable *Dharmapāla*, Abbot of Sakyashing Vihāra, *Anāgārikā Dhammāvati*, Abbot of Dharmakirti Vihāra, and monks of other *vihāras* are running such programmes. Some monks have centres for orphaned children and the aged as well. Venerable Sumangala opened free clinic services at Gana Mahavihara after his return from Japan, in order to win the people's hearts. It was open every weekend and called Buddha Sasana Sewa Samiti, which means Committee of Buddhist Welfare. It was an early free clinic in Nepal offered by the Theravāda movement and well accepted by the Nepalese. The work was not confined to the monastery. The services also sent a team of the Doctor and his assistants, supplied with medicines to help people free of change who were living in the

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[338] Information from Phra Sugandha Dhammasakiyo.

[339] Bhikkhu Sugandha, 'An Obituary Venerable Sumangala Mahāsthavir; A monk who modernized Buddhism in Nepal', **Lumbini A Journal of the LNBDS UK**, vol. 2, no. 1, May 1999, p. 10.

various slums of Kathmandu—all in the name of Theravāda Buddhism.[340] "I used to go with team to the slums for check their health. I was an assistant to the Doctor and gave medicine as the Doctor instructed.' Venerable Sugandha said that the number of people coming to the temple for medication increased every weekend."[341] Venerable Sumangala also established the Abhaye Upacar Kendra at Buddha Vihāra as a health service to the public.

Presently, this centre is operated outside the temple by the laity at Kingsway in Kathmandu.[342] These days, health clubs, or clinics, are available at almost all the main temples, for example at the Sakyasingha Vihāra in Patan, Sri Kirti Vihāra in Kirtipur, Dharmakirti Vihāra in Kathmandu, Pranidhi Purna Maha Vihāra, Balambu. In addition, Sakyasingha Vihāra, Sri Kirti Vihāra and Dharmakirti Vihāra provide free clinic services every weekend. On special occasions, other monasteries also organize free clinic services. Dharmakirti Vihāra Trust used to send a team to the valleys main hospitals to visit patients and give them biscuits and fruit. That programme quickly became well known.

After the demise of Nepal's first Sanghanayaka, Venerable *Pragyānanda* Mahāsthavir, in 1994, the committee of Sakyasingha Vihāra established the Free Clinic Centre, as the Venerable Sanghanayaka had desired. It was named the *Pragyānanda* Commemorate Free Health Clinic Centre. Dr. Keshari Vajracharya and Dr. Chandesh Ratna Tuladhar along with other volunteers give free services.[343] Moreover, on special days it provides free clinic services in different temples around the valley and outside the valley.

Sri Kirti Vihāra has maintained a free eye clinic and acupuncture clinic for the last ten years. In 2000 an eye medical group from Morioka, Japan lead by Dr. Matsuda Yojiko and with 10 Japanese eye medical doctors came to Sri Kirti Vihāra and offered eyeglasses to the patients.[344]

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[340] Bhikkhu Sugandha, An Obituary Venerable Sumangala Mahāsthavir; A Monk who modernized Buddhism in Nepal, **Venerable Sumangala Mahathero Commemorative Volume**, Kondannya, (ed.), (Kathmandu: Buddha Vihāra, 2000), p. 27.

[341] Information from Phra Sugandha at Wat Bhawan, Bangkok. 14 January 2006.

[342] Bhikkhu *Sudarshan*, "Bhikkhu Sumangala Mahāsthavir Jigu Lumantee," **Venerable Sumangala Mahathero Commemorative Volume**, Kondannya, (ed.), (Kathmandu: Buddha Vihāra, 2000), p. 8.

[343] R.B. Bandya, **Sanghamahanayaka Agramahapandita Bhikkhu Pragyananda Mahāsthavir**, (Kathmandu: N.M. Sri Kirti Vihāra, 1999), pp. 79-80.

[344] News, Ananda Bhumi, Vol. 8, No. 28, 2000, pp. 23-24.

They also checked the condition of all the patients that day. Every six months there are blood donation programs with the help of local organizations. Moreover, the Vihāra gives many different social services such as meeting, training, gathering, and conferences of governmental and non-governmental organizations. In the same way, most of the Buddhist monasteries of the valley are sites for such social activities.

Buddhist monks and nuns have been involved in various kinds of social welfare work for many decades. Some of the more remarkable work has been done under the leadership of Venerable Sumangala. He built a Buddhist house for the aged at Banepa, about 25 kilometres east of Kathmandu in 1993, which is still in operation. In the same area of Banepa, Venerable Ashwaghosa founded the Metta Centre, a centre for orphaned children.

The Metta Centre[345] is dedicated to loving-kindness for orphaned children. Funds are provided by different organizations inside and outside the country. Presently, there are ten girls at the centre. They go to school at State facilities outside the centre. A Japanese girl named Mari is doing volunteer work teaching Japanese and other activities. In her opinion the centre lacks manpower and needs more volunteers. It also needs educational facilities within the Centre rather than sending the girls outside. When these suggestions were put to some of the members they said that they felt the same way but that there were insufficient funds make the changes. However, they are trying their best to develop and provide facilities.

The Centre provides Buddhist education in the Centre and has created a Buddhist environment. The students are happy and love to study. They are from different parts of the country. Vishwa Shanti Vihāra does similar work in providing educational opportunities to poor boys, as previously discussed. These are some of the contributions of Theravāda to the society.

4.5. Tradition, Culture and Ceremony

Every religion has its own tradition, culture, and ceremony. These are the ways in which the people express their faith in their religion. Most of the components of rite and culture are meant to facilitate

[345] www.unesco.co.uk.

a happy and prosperous life and to protect against undesirable influences. There is no religion without tradition, culture, and ceremony in the world. So, too Buddhism. There are many different kinds' ceremonies practiced by Buddhists today. However, the Buddha did not originate most of the ceremonies practiced today. The Buddha, indeed, took a negative view of ceremony. Theravāda Buddhism emphasizes only two ceremonies: ordination and death rituals.[346]

According to Venerable Vipassi's teachings the Buddha taught three kinds of ceremony: *dāna*, *sila,* and *bhavana*. It is different according to the evolution of different countries. However, at the core, they all share the same tradition and norm.

In Nepal, the word for rites of passage is *samskara* or *dasakarma*. There are two classes or rites of passage, the Hindu (*Hindu Samsakara*), and Newār Buddhist (*Bauddha Samskara*). In Newār Buddhism there is a set of ten ceremonies.[347] These rites are practiced by all castes of Nepal especially within the Newār community. However, presently, only five of them are still strictly performed: birth purification, first rice-feeding, initiation, marriage, and death. These are analysed based on two opposing terms: pure/impure and auspicious/inauspicious.[348] Looking at the Buddhist *samskara* before revival of Theravāda Buddhism as done by Vajracharyas, the passages were chanted entirely in Sanskrit, as is usual in Nepal.[349] Theravāda Buddhist ceremonies increased gradually after the arrival of Theravāda monks and nuns. They developed their ceremonies by replacing the traditional ones. At the beginning, the Theravāda monastics simply recited the precepts, chanted recollections of the Triple Gem, and took food only before noon. As Theravāda gained in popularity it began to take on a certain shape and to take part in more of the traditional rites. According to Venerable Vipassi these rites can be divided in three groups, 1) *samskara* or life cycle rituals, 2) occasional, and 3) optional.[350]

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[346] David N. Gellner, 1992, op. cit., p. 197.

[347] Anil M. Sakya, **Rites of Passage: A comparison of Thailand and Nepal**, The Mphil Degree Dissertation submitted to Dept. of Social Anthropology, Univeristy of Cambridge, 1994, p. 8

[348] Ibid., p. 8; David N. Gellner, 1992, op. cit., p. 200.

[349] Dharmaditya Dharmacarya, T**he Buddha dharma**, 1/1, Calcutta, India, 1925, the program on Vaisakha full-moon day.

[350] Phra Vipassi, op. cit., p. 168.

The *samskara* or life cycle rituals are mostly adopted from traditional Newār Buddhism, but different interpretations have been given them. Let's see from the chart below.

Comparison of Rites	
Newār	**Theravāda**
Jatakarma: Birth	*Gabbamanga*: well being of the womb
Machabu Benkegu: Birth purification	*Namakarana*: Name giving
Anna passana / Janko: First rice feeding	*Annapasana*: Rice feeding
Busakhayegu: Tonsure	*Kesakappana*: Tonsure
Ihee: Mock marriage (girls only)	*Vijjarambha*: Beginning of studies
Barha Tayegu: Immuring (girls only)	*Risini*: Becoming homeless
Bare Chuyegu: Initiation (boys only)	*Pabbajja*: Lower ordination *Upasampada*: Higher ordination
Iheepa: Marriage	*Vivaha*: Marriage
Burha Janko: Old-age initiation	Old-age initiation (Very rare)
Daha Samskara: Funeral	*Dahakamma*: Funeral ceremony.

Before the revival of Theravāda Buddhism, the Vajracharya either performed the rites or had a necessary role in them. Since the re-introduction of Theravāda Buddhism, the Theravāda monks and nuns have become more involved in these rites. This it does not mean that the traditional Newār Buddhist priests lost their jobs, but rather that Theravāda monks and nuns are invited to the ceremonies for merit-making. Besides these rites, the people invite Theravāda monks and nuns on various other occasions for merit-making. Merit-making may be performed on occasions such as birthdays, for the goodness and welfare of the family, passing an examination or a job promotion, and laying the foundations of a new building. On every important life-event from birth to death, the monks and nuns are invited for holy blessings, *paritta* chanting, and for merit-making. In addition to these ceremonies the Theravāda Buddhists of Nepal daily perform three principle rites: recitation of *pancasila*, *buddhapuja*, and *paritta*.

1. Observation of Pancasila

The observation of *pancasila* is similar to that in other Buddhist countries. Their recitation is part of every function, whether official or unofficial. *Pancasila* or the five precepts is the basic rule of morality in Theravāda Buddhism. Every Buddhist observes the *pancasila* in daily life, and every function is followed by recitation of the precepts. Dharmaditya Dharmacarya introduced five precepts to modern Nepal for

the first time in 1925.[351] It was widely practiced after the Nepalese Theravāda monks and nuns came to Kathmandu in 1930. After the establishment of the Theravāda in Nepal they recited the five precepts following Myanmar tradition, which starts with salutation to the monks and asking for forgiveness by saying, "May the respected Venerable Sir please forgive me for all the bad actions that I may have committed by way of the three doors, body, speech and mind (*okāsa dvāra tayena kattam sabbam aparādha khamatha me bhante*)". Later, they founded *pariyatti* education, Buddhist education for the Nepalese. The first level courses place total emphasis on the importance and observation of *pancasila*, including the meaning and related stories. This is to give a basic moral education to the students.[352] These days everyone is familiar with *pancasila*. Even the traditional Newār Buddhists accept it as basic ethics and keeps it in practice. Moreover, the five precepts were the main thing in the introduction of Theravāda Buddhism. On special occasions, especially on full-moon days, devotees recite and keep the eight precepts instead of the five precepts.

2. The Chanting *Buddhapuja*

Chanting is found in every religion in the world. The origin of chanting in Buddhism is as old as Buddhism itself. The language of the chanting is *Pāli*, an ancient Indian language akin to Sanskrit, in which the Theravāda Buddhist scripture is recorded. In brief, chanting is a way of cultivating the virtues of respect, familiarity with the teachings, and peace of mind. Chanting or *buddhapuja* is a part of Buddhist tradition that every Buddhist practices around the world. It varies with country and tradition. Nepal adopted its chanting customs from the Myanmar and Sri Lankan traditions.

In Nepal, before the revival of Theravāda Buddhism, chanting was practiced in Vajrayāna Buddhism and traditional Newār Buddhism; it was called *nityapuja*. *Nityapuja* was recited only by Sakya and Vajracharya (Nepal: *Gubaju*) and only among traditional Buddhist families. It was a caste based ritual and was not a communal rite that anyone could take part in.[353] Moreover, this ritual was performed only once a year instead of daily. It takes long preparation and is a very

[351] Dharmaditya Dharmacarya, **The Buddha Dharma**, op.cit.
[352] Venerable Pannamurti, 2005, op. cit., p. 141.
[353] See, David N. Gellner, **Monk, Householder, and Tantric Priest**, (Cambridge).

expensive function. When Theravāda Buddhism was introduced, *nityapuja*, or we might better say, *buddhapuja*, became a daily ritual. The Theravāda introduced this as a ritual independent of caste boundaries and as a communal activity. Anyone from any caste, race, level, or colour is eligible to participate and to recite the recollections together with the monks, nuns, and lay people. The function of chanting as a caste based, expensive, annual ritual, was, in the Theravāda, changed to a casteless, communal, and daily ritual. In other words, the Theravāda introduced a communal spirit, which was absent from Newār Buddhism. So, casteless communal rituals were introduced to Nepal through the revival of Theravāda Buddhism,[354] greatly impacting the Newār community of modern Nepal.

Today, *buddhapuja* is regularly performed with public participation once or twice daily in every monastery throughout Nepal. At some monasteries many of the laity participates. For example at N. M. Sri Kirti Vihāra in Kirtipur, people have participated in morning chanting every day since it was established. The *buddhapuja* ceremony starts early in the morning at, 5:30, and 40 or more devotees participate every day. The monks lead the chanting. At the end of the chanting the monks or nuns teach Dhamma and end with a short meditation. Other monasteries perform these ceremonies every morning and evening, where all are welcome to participate in the ceremony. A much larger number of devotees participate on full-moon days. On these occasions, the monasteries fill with devotees. They pay respect to the Buddha image or stupa with water, light, flowers, incense, sweets, food, and other materials known as *pujabo nhyakegu*. These materials are decorated, displayed on trays, and conveyed to the Buddha image by handing them hand-to-hand, one devotee to the next as they stand in a queue.[355] These practices greatly affected Newār Buddhism because Newār Buddhism had not allowed other castes to participate in the rituals, or even to touch the materials. This function ends with Dhamma teachings by the monks and a short period of meditation. The participants also offer the four requisites (*Pāli*, *catupaccaya*) to the monks.

3. The *Mahaparitta* Chanting

The *Mahaparitta* ceremony (known in Nepal by the Sanskrit, *Mahaparitran*) is an important tradition practiced widely in Buddhist

[354] Information from Phra Sugandha .
[355] Phra Vipassi, op. cit., p. 170.

society. The word *maha* means great, mighty and abundant. The word, *paritta* is derived from *pari* + *ta. Pari* means all around (*samantato*), from all directions; *ta* means to protect or to rescue (*rakkhati*). *Paritta*, therefore, means protection from all directions. *Mahaparitta*, then, are Buddhist protective charms, words of power, incantations, and sacred spells. They have been part of the Theravāda Buddhist devotional tradition for centuries in all Theravāda countries. Nepal had forgotten these for a long time, but they were revived in the 20th century. Presently, there are two kinds of *paritta* chanting in Nepal: normal *paritta* chanting and *mahaparitta* chanting.

The normal *paritta* (Sanskrit, *paritran*) chanting, or appropriate recitations, has become a part of every occasion of the devotees' invitations, for example to the midday meal, birthdays, and special days. *Paritta* chanting is performed in every life-event ceremony from birth to death. Lay devotees invite the monks or nuns to their homes for chanting *paritta*, as a rite of protection against bad or evil or for success, happiness, and peace. On the celebration of the birthday of a family member, the monks recite the *Mangala Sutta*, the discourse on the highest blessing, followed by others according to the situation. If someone is ill or there is something wrong in the family or the house, they call the monks to the house for chanting.

The chants are recitations from the book of *paritta* Suttas. Such ceremonies use one Buddha image, if available, two candles, sacred thread, three incense sticks, a small water-vessel with pure water and some flowers, a plate or bowl with rice and a few rupees and other materials according to devotees' ability. The Buddha image is situated to the right or in front of the senior monks/nuns facing the devotees. The flowers are bound by holy thread three times round and bound three times round again to the small water-vessel. The thread is handed one to the other from the monks to the lay devotees. Traditionally, every Theravāda Buddhist ceremony begins with the participants taking the three refuges and the five precepts and end with a meditation on loving-kindness. At the end of the chanting the monks and nuns distribute the holy water to all attending and bind holy thread to their hands.

The chants are recited from a book of *paritta* Suttas, which consists primarily of eleven Suttas.[356] The eleven Suttas are the *Mangala,*

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[356] Ibid.

Ratana, Metta, Khandha, Mora, Vatta, Dhajagga, Atānatiya, Angulimāla, Bojjhanga, and *Pubbanha Suttas.* The Suttas are selected as appropriate to the occasion. The first *paritta* book was published in Nepal in 1940 in Newāri translation. In 1960 it was published in Nepali translation. Presently, there are many different versions with further explanations; however, the whole country uses a similar *paritta* chanting style.

The second form of chanting is *mahaparitta*, a major Theravāda ceremony in modern Nepal. This is very different from the normal *paritta* ceremony and is performed only by monks. There are more Suttas than for normal *paritta* chanting: 29 important Suttas from the Sutta Pitaka of the *Pāli* canon. *Mahaparitta* was first introduced in 1940 from Sri Lanka by Venerable *Amritānanda* and chanted at Parvasthana near Swayambhu, Kathmandu. It was quite impressive and recitations were frequently sponsored.[357] In this ceremony, the recitation continues for the whole day or night. Some devotees sponsor weekly chanting. This ceremony is held to be a greatly meritorious activity and may be attended by hundreds of devotees. Wherever such ceremonies are held, many people, sponsors and non-sponsors alike, attend, listening to the recitations and giving *dāna* to the monks and nuns.

In the beginning, *mahaparitta* was typically sponsored only by the wealthy due the various necessities and the need to accommodate hundreds of people. All the monks and nuns from the valley would participate and hundreds of people would attend. Within 50 years of its introduction the ceremony had been conducted over 200 times. Venerable *Sudarshan* used to keep a record these ceremonies but in time they became so common that he stopped keeping records. These days, the situation has changed and middle-class people are also able to sponsor *mahaparitta* with a limited number of participants.

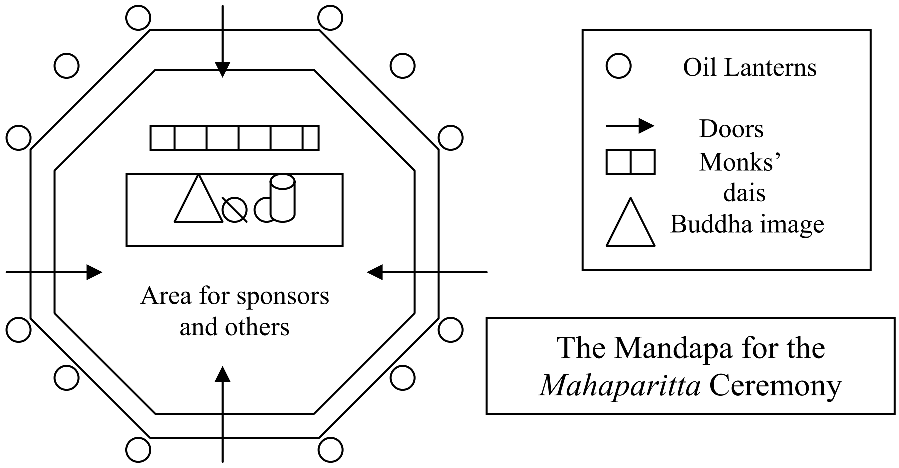
Preparation for the *mahaparitta* ceremony is quite elaborate. A site large enough to accommodate fifty or more persons is selected. A Temporary structure called a *mandapa*, where the chanting will take place, is constructed. The *mandapa* has eight corners and four doors, one in each of the four directions, representing the Noble Eightfold Path and the Four Noble Truths. Sometimes, the *mandapa* sections are fences covered with copper plates illustrated with Buddhist art. The *mandapa* is

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[357] Ibid., p. 173.

then decorated with colourful electric light bulbs and garlands of flowers and surrounded by 12 oil lanterns.

Diagram of a Mahaparitta Ceremony



At the centre a table is placed by the Buddha image. A stupa, a pot of water, holy books, and other religious objects are placed on the table. Other materials are placed in front of the candle and incense. The sacred thread is extended from the pot of water, around the *mandapa*, and through the entire area. Another spool of thread is kept behind the Buddha image; that thread will be held by the monks while they chant. Before the chanting begins, the sponsors bring the Buddha image, chanting books, stupa, and other materials in a procession from another place, perhaps their home, to the *mandapa*. Some ceremonies have classical musicians playing at the head of the procession. The possession proceeds with one or two men at the head sweeping the way, followed by the pure water, light, incense, the Tipitaka, the Buddha image, the stupa, *paritta* books, and other materials. They circumambulate the *mandapa* three times and enter by the main gate. Throughout the procession the participants recite the recollections of the Buddha, the Dhamma, and the Sangha (*Tiratana guna*). After the religious items have been installed at the centre of the *mandapa*, the devotees recite the *pancasila* or *atthasila* vows. There is then a talk on the importance of *mahaparitta* and the objectives of performing it by a senior monk.

The chanting begins with four or more members of the Sangha chanting the eleven Suttas of the normal *paritta*. Following that, the Sangha members chant in pairs. At the end of each Sutta, a new pair of

Sangha members recites another Sutta. The *Dhammacakkappavatana Sutta* and the *Atanatiya Sutta* are considered especially important. The *Dhammacakkappavatana Sutta* comes in the middle but the listeners pay close attention and repeat "*sadhu*, *sadhu*, *sadhu*" at the end of each section. Later, at the end of first section of the *Atanatiya Sutta*, the devotees offer *astha pariskara* (the eight necessities) to the Sangha, followed by *kalpa briksya dāna* and donations according to their wishes. After the donation activities the second section of the *Atanatiya Sutta* is chanted by a pair of monks. This period of Sutta chanting is followed by group chanting like at the beginning, and that closes the *mahaparitta* ceremony. At every ceremony, all the participants are invited to breakfast, lunch, and fresh food.

The *mahaparitta* is the only Buddhist ceremony that has been directly sponsored by the Kings of Nepal. It was chanted for the first time at the Royal palace in 1953 on the birth anniversary of King Tribhuvan through the efforts of Venerable *Amritānanda*. Later, it was chanted at Ananda Kuti Vihāra, and since than this ceremony has continued to be performed on the birth anniversary of every King of Nepal, with the support of the Government.

4. Temporary ordination (*Bara*, *Kaitapuja*)

The monks, who returned from Thailand after their studies, introduced temporary ordination. Vajrayāna Buddhism has a similar custom called *Bare Chuyegu*, "monastic initiation",[358] which confers the ritualistic status of *bhikkhu* upon the initiate.[359] No matter whether the practice was taken from Thailand or from Vajrayāna, the Nepalese Theravāda Buddhists adopted the practice of giving ordination for a limited period. These rituals were accepted widely and continue to be practiced today. The Buddhist public does not see it as an alien practice. In any case, the practice of temporary ordination conforms entirely to the accepted Theravāda ritualistic pattern of giving *pabbajja*.[360]

In the context of Vajrayāna Buddhism, temporary ordination was limited to the Bajracharyas and Sakyas, excluding the other Buddhist

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[358] David N. Gellner, 1992 op. cit., p. 163.

[359] Ramesh Chandra Tewari, "Socio-Cultural Aspect of Theravāda Buddhism in Nepal", **JIABS** Vol., 6, No. 2, p. 80.

[360] Ibid.

castes. In other words, it was a caste-based rite. There was no opportunity for others to ordain in Buddhism. However, *Bare Ghuyegu* was one of the most important rites for Newār Buddhists, in that through it one is "born" into the monastery community (*Baha*/*Bahi*), so that he can participate in its rites and functions as a bona fide member of the order. The belief in this ceremony among Newār Buddhists is very strong and they make a strict distinction between biological birth and the social birth affected by the rite. Biological birth does not necessarily imply social birth into the community. This belief is similar to the notion of the "'ripe" (*suk*) man in Thailand. The ordained monk must remain in the monkhood for four days before returning to domestic life. Temporary ordination at once signifies entry into the Buddhist order and crossing the threshold into adulthood, but there is no age limit to when it may be performed.

> Newār Children are generally initiated from the age of six months to fourteen years and usually in groups. Nevertheless, this is not an age group or initiation group system as with some tribes.[361]

John K. Locke has analysed the rite into seven parts: explanation of the meaning of ordination, cutting of hair, ordination, investiture, entering the temple, offering rice and money, and procession of the monk.[362] This rite is entirely based on caste and the separate monasteries, which belong to specific communities of Newār Buddhists. Others may not become members of the community. There is, however, another, non-Buddhist ritual, called *kaitāpuja* or *bratabandha*, or going into homelessness. In this ceremony, a Bajracharya or Sakya acts as preceptor. The rite is performed on special occasions, particularly in celebration of the 70th birthday of a grandmother, grandfather, or other relative. Once the Theravāda introduced temporary ordination and allowed anyone, Buddhist or non-Buddhist to ordain, it became a major rite which has captured the interest of the people of Nepal. The first time it was performed, in 1956, Venerable *Pragyānanda* offered *bratabandha*, or initiation, to the non-priestly-caste boys who became Buddhist monks, shaving their heads and dressing them as mendicants. The novices stay at the *vihāra* and study the Dhamma. Within few years of its introduction, many hundreds of people had participated in such ceremonies, becoming *sāmanera pabbajja*. This, then, was another choice for parents to perform

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[361] Anil M. Sakya, **Rites of Passage**, 1994, op.cit., p. 15.

[362] John K. Locke, **Newār Buddhist Initiation Rites,** INAS, Vol. 2, No., 2 June 1975, pp. 5-12.

kaita puja or *kayta puja*. Therefore, it was unique, in both social and religious respects.[363] It is a casteless ritual, not limited. In cases where the ordinand wished to remain in robes, the ordination could be extended to several months, whereas the old Newār custom limited the period to three or four days.

Temporary mass ordinations were introduced in 1974 at Lumbini and become popular in Nepalese society, being practiced frequently.[364] Some say it was introduced from the Thai Buddhist tradition, where males take short-term ordination in order to become "*suk"* or "ripe". Some say the Nepalese Theravādins adapted or developed the practice from the Newār Buddhist rite of *Bare Chuyegu*, or initiation rite. There may be truth in both views, but, in any case, the Theravāda introduced short-term ordination as a communal ritual to Nepal. Everyone has the opportunity of becoming a novice or monk in accordance with Theravāda Vinaya rules. According to the Theravāda Buddhist tradition admission to the Sangha is open to all. There are no barriers of caste, sex, or status, because the order of the Sangha is like the ocean and the *bhikkhus* are like the rivers that flow into the same ocean. Each river has its separate name and existence but once it enters the ocean it looses its separate name and existence. It becomes one with the rest. This is the case of the Sangha. In the Theravāda tradition a *sāmanera* is a trainee and can leave the Sangha at any time and become a layman, therefore short-term ordination was widely accepted within a short period of its introduction to Nepalese society.

One remarkable incident was the temporary mass ordination held in 1985 in which 105 ordained at Sri Kirti Vihāra as part of the birth anniversary celebrations for the Most Venerable Mahasanghanayaka of Nepal, Venerable *Pragyānanda* Mahāsthavir. The following year in 1986 87 women's took the eight precepts on his birth anniversary at the same Vihāra, Kirtipur. The practice was highly attractive to the Buddhists of Nepal. Possibly the second largest mass ordination was held in 1985 when 73 Sakyas were given ordination at Sri Kirti Vihāra by His Holiness Somdet Phra Nyanasamvara the Supreme Patriarch of Thailand. His Holiness had come on the invitation of the All Nepal Bhikkhu Sangha to celebrate his 72nd birth anniversary in Nepal.[365] After the ordination, His

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[363] Information from Phra Sugandha at Wat Bhawan Bangkok.
[364] Phra Vipassi, op. cit., p. 110.
[365] Biography of His Holiness, 2546, op. cit., pp. 18-22.

Holiness himself gave Buddhist teachings to the newly ordained. The influence of this ceremony is still in the hearts of the Buddhists of Nepal and they greatly respect the Thai Buddhist contribution to the development of Theravāda Buddhism. Such mass temporary ordinations have subsequently been held at several times in various *vihāras*. Especially on school holidays, *vihāras* conduct ten-day ordination ceremonies. These ceremonies are not only for boys, but girls also take part and live at the *vihāra*. They learn basic Buddhism and morality. These activities have influenced Nepalese society and affected Newār Buddhism. Many parents say that these activities are good because their children have the chance of learning a moral view of life and that they became good children through the experience. Moreover, such ordinations are less costly than *kayta puja*, to which the family must invite all the relatives. Due to the low cost and simplicity, the children become more rational and moral. The practice has had great impact on a large scale, as compared to *kayta puja*.

Some traditional Newār Buddhists continue to practice as they did before, and some do not. In some cases, other Buddhists send their children to take ordination instead of celebrating *kayta puja*, hoping that their children will get a moral education.

With these considerations in mind, the Sukhi Hotu Nepal, a young Buddhists organization, recently organized temporary ordinations at Sri Kirti Vihāra in which more then one hundred people participated. Moral education was given side-by-side with modern values. It was a seven-day ordination and used modern high technology in the educational process.[366] This was very successful mass ordination after a decade in which few were conducted.

4.6. Buddhist Art and Architecture

Mahayana Buddhism flourished in Nepal for many centuries and has come to be known as Newār Buddhism. The Buddhist art and architecture of Nepal has also been dominated by this tradition. For example in the *baha, bahi,* stupa, and other ideal Buddhist symbols. Historians of Buddhist art, say that Buddhist art originated from contact with other cultures and traditions of Asia, and of course of the world, around 250 BCE. Buddhist contacts with other cultures have influenced

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[366] Information from Venerable Nigrodha, Secretary of Sukhi Hotu Nepal.

the development of the devotional art form and the Buddha statue. There was the "anionic" phase in which direct representation of the Buddha was avoided, up until about the first century BCE. The direct representation of the Buddha emerged by the first century CE and has since diversified and spread around the world.[367] However, Buddhist *vihāras* and stupas were already being constructed at the time of the Buddha. There are fewer records of *vihāra* construction than of stupa construction. There are many such records from the time of the great King Ashoka. Among them some of the stupas are still in existence in India and Nepal. In particular, in the city of Patan in Kathmandu Valley there are four stupas, which are believed to have been built at the time when King Ashoka visited the Valley. In the same time-period his daughter Princess Carumati, built Carumati Vihāra, which may have became a model for other Buddhist *vihāras* in the valley. All the traditional Buddhist *vihāras*, known as *baha* and *bahi* are on the same model. According to Venerable *Sudarshan* these *vihāras* are similar to the *vihāras* of the Buddha's time.[368] It is also possible to say that they are similar to Theravāda *vihāras*. Later, they added many different decorations and artwork due to changing political situations and cultural contacts. Many different devotional arts emerged, attractive, symbolic, and becoming quite complicated.

Venerable *Sudarshan* Mahasthvir has said that the revival of Theravāda Buddhism in Nepal has played an important role in the preservation and development of Newāri culture and art. He writes that at the beginning of the revival of Theravāda Buddhism the great Newāri poet Sri Citradhara Hridaya, born a traditional Buddhist asked, "What has Theravāda Buddhism given to us?" The answer to this question is "What has Theravāda Buddhism *not* given us?"[369] He further says that most of old *vihāras* (*baha*, *bahi*, stupa, etc.) were replicas of the *aramas* of the Buddha's time. There are very few of them that had been maintained, and most of the *vihāras* were nearly forgotten. The revival of Theravāda in Nepal initiated the renovation of these old *vihāras* and the first monks lived in them for the revival campaign. They lived in and taught the Nepalese from those centres. Structurally, the old *vihāras* were renovated but the monks were not in a position to restore the old art and architecture of the *bahas* and *bahis*.[370] Therefore, Theravāda *vihāras* were similar to

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367 www.answer.com/encyclopedia/Buddhist art.

368 Bhikkhu *Sudarshan*, **Nepalay Bihara Visesta,** (Kathmandu: Sri Kirti Vihāra Publication, N.d.), p. 2.

369 Bhikkhu *Sudarshan*, http://www.Ircnepal.org/papers/cbhnm-p. op. cit.

370 Ibid.

the *bahas* and *bahis*. Theravāda Buddhist *vihāras* are mostly one building with one Buddha statue. The Ananda Kuti Vihāra, Nepal's first Theravāda monastery, was founded by Venerable *Dhammāloka* and later developed into the complete form of a Buddhist *vihāra*. According to Theravāda Buddhism, a complete Buddhist *vihāra* includes a stupa, an *uposatha* (*Buddhavasa*), and monks' residences (*Sanghavasa*). With the aid of Sri Lankan Buddhists led by Venerable Nārada Mahathera, the Ananda Kuti Vihāra was complete in this sense by the early 1940s. As a result of Venerable Nārada Mahathera's involvement it has a Sri Lankan style stupa and Buddha statue. Later, Sri Kirti Vihāra, Vishwa Shanti Vihāra and the International Buddhist Meditation Centre also acquired all the requirements of complete Buddhist *vihāras.*

After the completion of Ananda Kuti Vihāra, Venerable *Dhammāloka* brought a Myanmar Buddha image from Kusinagara, which had been donated by Venerable U Chandramani Mahathera. The Buddha image is made of marble, and we may say that it is the first Theravāda Buddha statue in modern Nepal. Later, Buddha images were imported from Myanmar, Sri Lanka, and Thailand. Presently, most *vihāras* have a Thai Buddha image. There has been little or no local production of Buddha images in the last decade. However, local Buddha images are simple, normal and still more attractive to the devotees inside the country and abroad. Sri Kirti Vihāra has a variety of Buddha images from different countries, however, Thai style construction and Buddha images dominate. The main attraction is the depiction of the four holy places, with colourful pictures and replica. Vishwa Shanti Vihāra and IMBC are dominated by Buddha images from Myanmar.

In the last decade, Thailand has played a significant role in developing Theravāda Buddhism in Nepal, not only by giving opportunities for Nepalese monks and novices to study in Thailand, but also by extending financial aid. The 19th Supreme Patriarch of Thailand made donations for the development of Buddhist sites to the main Theravāda Buddhist centres in Kathmandu Valley during his visit in 1985. One of those sites, Sri Kirti Vihāra was gradually developed with the help of Thai Buddhists. In 1988 H.E. the Ambassador of Thailand to Nepal, *Sirichaya Buddhibaidya* chose this centre to build an *uposathagara*. His Holiness granted a structural map for the hall and functioned as Honorary President along with the Sanghamahanayaka of Nepal. Sri Kirti Vihāra, which was designed by skilful Thai artists, is now

one of the more recognizable examples of Thai architecture in Kathmandu. An image of the Buddha five inches in height and a pair of his foremost disciples are enshrined in the *uposathagara*. Thai Airways International donated money through which the ground floor was decorated and given the name Thai Hall.

Construction of *Vihāras*		
5 YEARS GAP In Bikram Sambat (-57=CE)	**Number of *Vihāras***	**Remark**
1996-2006	4	Some old *vihāras* have been renovated. The construction dates of eight other *vihāras* are unclear.
2007-2016	4	
2017-2026	2	
2027-2036	9	
2037-2046	14	
2047-2056	11	
2057-2062	2	
Total	46	
* Source, Dharmaratna Sakya, **Nepalay Sthavirvada Buddha Dharma, Pavitra Bahādur Bajracharya: A Tribute to His Life and Work**, (Kathmandu: New Nepal Press, 2002), pp.137-140		

It is difficult to identify any specific significance to the influence of specifically Theravāda art for modern Nepal. However, it has gradually influenced Nepalese art since it was revived in Nepal. Venerable *Nyānapurnika* told me in an interview:

> Since the time of the revival of Theravāda Buddhism, Nepal has produced and developed Theravāda art in various fields. It has also had significant impact on drawing, sculpture, and others.

Looking at the major Buddhist symbols might give some idea of Theravāda art that is simple, clear, and effective. Traditional Newār Buddhist art and architecture are highly decorated. Theravāda Buddhist art is, by comparison, less highly decorated and ornamented. The architecture of the *vihāras* is simple. The Buddha images in the main chapels are mostly simple and decorated by only some flowers and other minor decorations. Theravāda Buddhist art in Nepal even though there are no any special signs, deals mainly with the Buddha's life history, the four holy places, the *Dhammacakka*, and the Buddhist flag. Venerable Mahapragya, Venerable *Pragyānanda*, and other monks were well-known Buddhist artists. They made drawings illustrating the teachings of

the Buddha as symbolic Dhamma. Venerable Mahapragya also made Buddha images for worship. The Buddha image at Kirtipur and his own image at Gana Mahavihara are examples of his work. Photographs of his famous art have been published with explanations in the three volumes of his biography. Photographs of the work of Venerable *Pragyānanda* have also been published in his commemorative volume. Besides these works, the monks' depictions of the *Vesantara Jataka* and the *Mahasatva Jataka* are the most famous. These appear in almost all the *vihāras* of the valley. Among them, the depiction from the *Mahasatva Jataka* of the Bodhisatta feeding the tiger by cutting his own flesh is the most famous. It is known as *Namura Bhagawan*. The place where he fed the tiger, called *Namo Buddha* or *Namura*, has become one of the holiest Buddhist sites in Nepal.[371] There are not only drawings and paintings of this episode, but some *vihāras* have sculptures of it as well, for example at Pranidhi Purna Maha Vihāra in Balambu.

The Buddha says in the *Mahaparinibbana Sutta* that there are four places worthy of pilgrimage: where the Buddha was born, where he achieved enlightenment, where he delivered his first sermon, and where he achieved *Parinibbana*. Nepalese Buddhists have been greatly influenced by this, and these four holy places are depicted in paintings throughout the country. Since the beginning of the revival of Theravāda Buddhism in Nepal, Buddhist monks have been organizing pilgrimages to the four holy places. Venerable *Sudarshan* organized such pilgrimages, the largest including 500 people. Nepalese Buddhists desire to pay respect at these places, and every year people visit them. However, lack of funds prevents many from going on distant pilgrimages. For this reason, Venerable *Pragyānanda* for many years desired to make replicas of the four holy places. Venerable Dharmakirti,[372] a resident monk of Sri Kirti Vihāra says, "He was searching for a better place to build in the valley of Kathmandu. In the end, his choice was Kirtipur and he started to build at Sri Kirti Vihāra."

Therefore, at Sri Kirti Vihāra, Kirtipur, replicas of the four holy places, with sculptures of the Buddha's birth, his Enlightenment, giving his first sermon, and his *Parinibbana*, were built in order to give information to the Buddhists of Nepal. These representations of four

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[371] Amrit Sthapit, "Namo Buddha**", Lumbini, A Journal of LNBDS UK,** Vol. 9, 2006, p. 4.

[372] He was one of the great upasakas of Venerable Pragyananda before ordain. He is well known among all the senior monks of Nepal.

significant events in the Buddha's life were fashioned by Nepalese of cement in a simple Nepalese style. The four replicas are on the roof of the hall. Inside the hall there are cement sculptures of the four postures of the Buddha. There is a painted background to these sculptures, lending realism to the images. Painted representations of the four postures are found in many *vihāras*, but sculptures are not to be found in other *vihāras*. Vishwa Shanti Vihāra has half-sculpted, half-painted depictions of the Buddha's four postures in the main hall. The main hall of Pranidhi Purna Mahavihara has depictions of the Buddha's enlightenment and of his *Parinibbana* fashioned ten years ago of different kinds of bean. Other *vihāras* feature such paintings in the main hall. The *Dhammacakka*, or "Wheel of Dhamma" has been used in Buddhist art since the revival. Most commonly the form of the *Dhammacakka* used is the one representing the Noble Eightfold Path. It has become the symbol of Buddhism in Nepal.

Nepal is a Hindu country where many different gods and goddess are worshiped. When Buddhism was reintroduced, there was an attempt to understand the Buddha as an *avatar*, or incarnation, of Vishnu. Buddhists reinterpreted this concept by saying that when the Buddha returned to his birthplace at Lumbini after his enlightenment, all the Hindu gods and goddess descended to honour him. That event is described in a devotional song called "The Buddha Descends to Lumbini". According to Venerable Sugandha, this song was composed in 1865. It is included in the current **Gyanmala**, a book of devotional songs for contemporary Buddhists, and widely sung on different occasions. This song is depicted in art by unknown artists and has become unique art to both Buddhists and non-Buddhists. The depictions are mainly painted on cloth, but some can be found on paper. In the paintings the god Brahma is sweeping the ground before the Buddha; Sarasvati, the god of education, is spreading a carpet; the King of Alankapuri Kubera is throwing money and wealth; the god of the wind is waving a fan; the god of fire is burning incense; Varuna, king of the Nagas is making streams of water to flow; the god of the gods, Mahadeva or Shiva, is beating his drum; Narayana, the god of protection is blowing his conch; King Yama is taking his staff in hand and clearing the way; the king of the gods, Indra, is holding an umbrella over the Buddha; crowds of monkeys fan him with *chowries*; flowers are falling like rain. This is the great gospel of the Buddha's visit to Lumbini. This art has become famous and is displayed in almost all the monasteries.

Other works of art have also been significantly influenced by the revival of Theravāda Buddhism. For example, most sculptures and other Buddhist symbols, which are sold in the markets as souvenirs, are influenced by Theravāda art. Moreover, the Government has printed coins depicting the Buddha and the holy places.

Chapter V

Conclusions and Suggestions:

Nepal is the country where the Buddha, the founder of Buddhism, was born. As mentioned earlier, the history of Buddhism in Nepal is very vague and not much is certain since the time of the Buddha. However, there is evidence that Buddhism was popular during Buddha's time in Nepal. There is evidence that the Buddha visited Nepal and gave discourses to his relatives and others, and that he ordained *bhikkhus* and *bhikkhunis* there. According to Buddhist scholars, the Theravāda tradition, the oldest unbroken Buddhist tradition, existed in Nepal from the time of the Buddha. The evidence from the accounts of King Ashoka is more reliable. The great Emperor of ancient India King Ashoka visited Lumbini and sent his Dhamma missionaries (*dhammaduta*) to Nepal after the Third Buddhist Council (*Sanghayana*). Moreover, Buddhist legends say that one of King Ashoka's daughters married a prince of Nepal and settled in Cabahil, Kathmandu, where she constructed a Buddhist monastery, the Cabahil monastery, and became a *bhikkhuni* for the rest of her life. In addition, the records of Chinese travellers give valuable information on the existence of Theravāda Buddhist monks, who practised and studied along side other Buddhist sects in Nepal.

After 1382 CE, Buddhism was forced to change by the policies of King Jayasthiti Malla who imposed the caste system on Nepalese society. Buddhist culture and tradition were banned, and celibate monks were forced to disrobe and to marry. Vajrayāna or Newār Buddhism evolved following the demise of Theravāda Buddhism. In 1846 the autocratic and isolationist *Rānā* regime gained power and Nepal was closed to the rest of the world for a century. During this period, Buddhism was totally forgotten by the non-Buddhists of Nepal. It was known and practised only in certain restricted communities, such as the Vajracharyas (*Bajracharyas*), Shakyas, Tuladhars. The *Rānā* regime banned all Buddhist religious activities. They prohibited conversions from Hinduism to Buddhism, but traditional Buddhists were permitted to become Hindus.

At the beginning of 19th century, many South Asian countries saw reform movements with the goal of modernizing Buddhism. The aim of these movements was to bring Buddhism back to India and Sri Lanka. One of the most active Buddhist organizations the Mahābodhi Society was founded in India under the leadership of *Anāgārikā Dharmapāla*. This organization was the first Buddhist organization in modern times to be established with the aim of internationalising Buddhism. The success of the Mahābodhi Society encouraged the Nepalese who came in contact with it. These Nepalese were mostly traditional Newār Buddhists who were travelling as merchants or pilgrims. They played an important role in the Theravāda revival movement in Nepal.

Jagat Man Vaidya, later known as Dharmaditya Dharmacarya, a Newār Buddhist by birth, initiated the Buddhist revival movement with the help of the Mahābodhi Society. He pioneered Buddhist revivalism in Nepal by publishing a Buddhist journal in several languages, including, for example, Newāri, Nepali, Hindi, and English. One of his significant deeds was to celebrate Vesak Day, also known as *Baisakha Purnimā*, *Buddha Jayanti,* and *Swāñya Puñhi*, in Nepal, commemorating the Buddha's birth, enlightenment, and *Parinibbāna*. He founded the *Buddha Dharma Uddhar Sangha, the Buddhopasaka Sangha*, and other organizations for the propagation of Buddhism in Nepal.

The revival campaign entered a new stage when Nepalese youths took ordination in the Theravāda tradition in 1928. The first Nepalese to take ordination was Venerable *Mahapragna*, a Hindu Shrestha by birth. Venerable *Pragyānanda* (Karmasheel), who converted from Gelung of Tibetan tradition to Theravāda with Venerable U Chandramani at Kusinagar, India, was the first yellow-robed monk to appear on the streets of Kathmandu Valley, at the end of 1930s. Their ordination in Theravada Buddhism was strengthened the revival campaign in Nepal, who then returned to Nepal as Theravāda missionaries. In time the revival campaign succeeded.

Venerable *Amritānanda* was another well-known Buddhist scholar and pioneer of the revival of Theravāda Buddhism in modern Nepal. He ordained under Venerable U Chandramani at Kusinagara in 1936 and was imprisoned along with Venerable Mahapragya at Bhojpur in 1937. Later, he was exiled along with Venerable Mahapragya. In 1942, he returned from his study in Sri Lanka to Nepal and gave discourses at

Swayambhu. Many people were impressed. Other monks, *sāmaneras*, and nuns of Nepal who were studying abroad also returned and propagated Buddhism in the streets of Kathmandu Valley. This was a great breakthrough under the isolationist *Rānā* regime. The *Rānā* regime had banned public assemblies out of fear of political unrest and demands for political reform. Because of their religious activities, the monks, *sāmaneras*, and nuns were arrested on 30th July 1944 and expelled once again from Nepal. The nuns were allowed to remain in the *vihāra* until the end of the *vassavasa*.

In exile, the monks formed the Dharmodaya Sabhā in 1944, in India, with Venerable U Chandramani as Chairman and Venerable *Amritānanda* as General Secretary. With the establishment of the Dharmodaya Sabhā the Theravāda Buddhist revival movement changed its means of propagation. It was able to conduct a goodwill mission to Nepal in 1946 under the leadership of the well-known scholar Venerable Nārada Mahathera of Vajiraramaya, Colombo. The members of this mission were Venerable Nārada, Venerable *Amritānanda*, Venerable Priyadarshi, Dr. Ratna Surya and Professor Aryapal. They met with Prime Minister Padma Shumsher J. *Rānā*, who reversed policy and permitted the exiled monks to return. Venerable *Dhammāloka* was the first, returning to Nepal immediately after receiving a letter from Venerable *Amritānanda*. He arrived in Kathmandu in June 1946. Venerable Nārada returned to Nepal several times, and with his support the Nepalese constructed the Sri Lankan style stupa at Ananda Kuti Vihāra. He brought a shoot of the Bodhi tree and a relic of the Buddha to Nepal. Venerable Nārada also established the first *simā* (*uposatha*) in Nepal for *bhikkhus* at the Vihāra. Since then, Theravāda Buddhism has gained ground in Nepalese society and made progress. Theravāda monks propagated Buddhism by performing ceremonies, giving Dhamma talks and publishing Buddhist texts. Many *vihāras* were built in and outside Kathmandu Valley to propagate the Dhamma.

In 1950, democracy under the leadership of His Majesty King Tribhuvan replaced the autocratic *Rānā* regime. This resulted in the rapid development of Theravāda Buddhism. Buddhist monks and nuns were able carry out their duties freely and without hindrance throughout the country. In 1951 the Bhikkhu Sangha formed the Akhil Nepal Bhikkhu Mahasangha (All Nepal Bhikkhu Association) for the further propagation of Buddhism in Nepal. Venerable monks and nuns played a significant

role in the propagation of Theravāda Buddhism nationwide. In the same year, the Buddhists of Nepal succeeded in bringing the relics of Venerable Sariputta and Venerable Moggallana, the chief disciples of the Buddha, for exhibition in Nepal. His Majesty King Tribhuvan chaired the welcoming committee and a reception was held in the Royal Palace. The following year, 1952, *Buddha Jayanti* was celebrated throughout the country with the support of His Majesty King Tribhuvan. On this occasion His Majesty the King declared *Baisakha Purnima* or *Buddha Jayanti* day a public holiday throughout the kingdom.

His Majesty King Mahendra visited Lumbini, and erected the Mahendra Pillar in Lumbini Zone. He also banned animal slaughter on this auspicious day of Vesak throughout the kingdom. Nepalese Buddhists also succeeded in bringing the Fourth World Fellowship of Buddhists Conference (WFB) to Nepal. Gradually, Theravāda Buddhist monasteries were founded. Dhamma activities such as Buddhist education, *buddhapuja*, meditation, public discourses, publications of Buddhist texts, and mass ordinations were conducted. Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and other countries helped Nepal in its Theravāda revival efforts. Theravāda monks established *bhikkhu* training centres. After Ananda Kuti Vihāra, Vishwa shanti Vihāra established the Vishwa Shanti Bauddha Shikshalaya, a Buddhist School under Venerable Nyānapunnika Mahāsthavir. It teaches both secular and Buddhist subjects to the novices.

Today, there are nearly 100 Theravāda monasteries with more than four hundred monks, *sāmaneras* and nuns. The current Sanghanayaka is the Most Venerable Subodhananda of Gana Mahavihara, Kathmandu. The President of the All Nepal Bhikkhu Sangha is Venerable *Kumar Kāshyapa* of Ananda Kuti Vihāra, Swayambhu, Kathmandu; the head office of the All Nepal Bhikkhu Sangha is at Vishwa Santi Vihāra, New Baneshwor, Kathmandu. Besides promoting the Dhamma, Theravāda monks and nuns (*anāgārikās*) are involved in social welfare activities such as free health camps and training centres, both in the monasteries and outside. The Theravāda movement is responsible for initiating the demise of casteism in the country. It is also responsible for the upliftment of women's position in society, and fostering human equality and dignity.

In 1964 the All Nepal Bhikkhu Mahasangha established a Theravāda educational system *Pariyatti Sikkha* (Buddhist Saturday School) taught in Buddhist monasteries. It was well accepted in Nepalese society. According to the latest count there are more than 32 centres throughout the country. The current head office is at Vishwa Shanti Vihāra in New Baneswora, Kathmandu.

Besides these, many monks and nuns operate other educational institutions including nursery schools, primary schools, and higher schools. There are higher education institutes, for example, Siddhartha University in Banepa and the International Buddhist University in Lumbini. Many Buddhist organizations were founded and they also hold classes and maintain research centres, as does the Dharmakirti Buddhist Research Centre. The Buddhist temples and organizations bring out a number of publications, annually, monthly, weekly, and on special occasions. **The Dharmodaya**, **The Ananda Bhumi**, and **The Dharmakirti** are the oldest Buddhist journals in Nepal still in publication.

The revival of Theravāda Buddhism in Nepal also had profound effects on the culture and on the religious practices of the Nepalese. Daily chanting or *buddhapuja*, short-term ordination, reciting and observing *sila* (the moral code), the casteless system, the celebration of Vesak Day, and celibacy among others were introduced. The revival of meditation is also one of the important aspects in the development and reform of society. Within a short time of the introduction of Buddhist meditation, it gained wide practice. Many monasteries have been built and become centres for multiple activities. Numbers of literary works been and continue to be produced. The Theravāda revival, in short, has reformed society.

Buddhism in Nepal is unique because of the existence of three different Buddhist traditions, Newār Buddhism (Vajrayāna), Tibetan Buddhism (Mahayana), and Theravāda Buddhism. It was not possible for Theravāda Buddhism to develop in Nepal without close relations with the other traditions, but it developed into a tradition in its own right. Although they have different cultural traditions and are developing in their own ways, the lay followers are the same people. In other words, Theravāda lay Buddhists have no separate identity from other Buddhists. There are a number of lay Buddhist organizations, such as Dharmodaya

Sabhā, Dharmakirti Institute, the Young Buddhist Association, the Female Buddhist Association, and Sukhi Hotu Nepal. These are multi-cultural and multi-religious in their daily practices.

Even though the revival of this tradition was begun only about 80 years ago, it has already gained a strong foothold in Nepal and is gaining popularity day by day. The reason for its popularity lies in many things, for example, the simple and easily understood way that the teachings are given, the simple way of life of the monks and nuns, and the various beneficial activities undertaken by the *vihāras*. Theravāda Buddhist monks and nuns are well respected by the people and their contributions to the promotion of the Buddha's teachings are widely recognised. Although the numbers of monks and nuns and of monasteries are small compared to those of other Asian countries like Thailand, Sri Lanka, and Myanmar, they are increasing day-by-day. If the trend continues, Theravāda Buddhism will become one of the prominent religious traditions in Nepal. It is only natural that this oldest Buddhist tradition should gain the place of honour it deserves in the country where the founder of the religion was born. However, there are certain things to be changed within the Sangha to achieve unity for the betterment of Buddhism and society. Concrete institutional education should be provided inside the country.

Further Suggestions:

This thesis has presented a short history of Theravāda Buddhism in ancient Nepal. The topic deserves further, more detailed, research. The story of the ordination of Princess Carumati as a *bhikkhuni* offers hints about the establishment of the Bhikkhuni Sangha, which invites study. Modern Theravāda Buddhist monasteries were developed in different ways. Therefore, physical as well as cultural and social development should be studied and how much it affects modern Nepalese art should be investigated. Furthermore, comparative research on temporary ordination between Newār Buddhism and Theravāda Buddhism needs to be carried out. In addition, the history of journalism in Nepal should be researched in terms of the religious and social reformation on Nepal.

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Appendix I

Buddhist Organizations and Associations:

01. All Nepal Bhikkhu Association.		4298402
02. Anandakuti Vihara Trust, KTM.		4271420
03. Buddha Bhoomi Bauddha Kendra, KTM.		4362514
04. Buddhist Communication Centre, Patan.		5523065
05 Birat Bauddha Sangha, Biratnagar		
06. Bir Purna Pustak Sangrahalaya, Patan.		5533077
07. Buddha Anniversery Committee, KTM.		425 9595
08. Buddhist Home for Aged, Banepa.		011-661 674
09. Aksheshwar Maha Vihara, Pulchok.		552 7670
10. Buddhist Education & Social Development Centre		4250384
11. Buddhist Women's Association, Nepal		422 5490
12. Baudha Yuwa Committee, Patan.	C/o	554 3998
13. Charumati Buddhist Mission.		448 4669
14. Dharmakirti Buddhist Circle, KTM		4259466
15. Dharma Vijaya Padanama, KTM.		4253454
16. Dhamma Janani Vipassana Centre, Lumbini		
17. Dhamma Kitti Vipassana Centre, Kirtipur		
18. Dhamma Terai Vipassana Centre, Birgunj		
19. Dharmodaya Sabha, KTM.		422 7176

20. Dharmashring Vipassana Centre.	422 5490
21. Himalayan Buddhist Foundation.	552 0558
22. International Buddhist Society, Lumbini.	071-580133
23. Int. Buddhist Meditation Centre, KTM.	448 2707
24. Jnanamala Mahasangha Nepal	
25. Jyotidaya Sangha, Chapagau.	5571794
26. Karuna Bauddha Sangha, Tansen-Palpa	
27. Lotous Research Centre, Patan.	553 4698
28. Lumbini Development Trust.	071-580 200
29. Mahila Bauddha Sangha, Baglung.	068-520 224
30. Mahila Bauddha Sangha, Kathmandu	
31. Maitreya Bauddha Sangha, Bhaktapur	
32. Metta Centre, Banepa.	011- 661 244
33. Nagadesh Buddhist Association, Thimi.	6635397
34. Nagarjun Buddhist Academy, Patan.	552 7446
35. Nepal Bauddha Parishada, Patan.	5534277
36. Nepal Bauddha Pariyatti Shiksha,	442 2250
37. Nepal Bauddha Pariyatti Shiksha Sabha	
38. Panditarama Meditation Centre,Lumbini	071580 118
39. Samyak Lyayemha Pucha, Balambu	3212682
40. Samyak Shiksha Samuha, Dharan,	025-520 728
41. Satya Sandesh Prachar Samuha, KTM.	

42. Sharana Prakashan, Kathmandu, 4255960
43. Shree Kirti Buddhist Association, 433 0836
44. Shanti Ban, Godavari, Lalitpur, Nepal, 5529452
45. Society for Buddhist Studies, Lalitpur, 5528007
46. Sukhi Hotu Nepal, KTM. 422 6702, 448 2985
47. Swayambhu Bikash Mandal, 427 1712
48. Swayambhu Jnanamala Sangha, Kathmandu
49. Swayambhu Sewa Samiti, 4223973
50. Swayambhu Byavasthapan Tatha Sanrakshan Samiti,4277236
51. Theravad Dayak Parishad, KTM, 426 1976
52. Vajracharya Sanrakshan Guthi, KTM, 4231484
53. Vajrayan Tatha Mahavihar Sangha, KTM, 4262304
54. Young Buddhist Group, Kathmandu, 426 1209
55. Young Men Buddhist Association, 553 8413
56. Yuva Bauddha Sangha, Pokhara, 061-520 517

Appendix II

List of Monks, Novices and Anagarikas studying abroad

MONKS AND NOVICES

I. Thailand

1. Bhikkhu Anil Man Dhammasakiyo (Sugandha)
2. Bhikkhu Vipassi Dhammaramo
3. Bhikkhu Jit Bahadur Gurung
4. Bhikkhu Krishna Thapamagar
5. Bhikkhu Pannamurti
6. Bhikkhu Sujan Sujano
7. Bhikkhu Anil Sumankitti
8. Bhikkhu Santosh Santosho
9. Bhikkhu Khemik Suddhasilo
10. Bhikkhu Suman Rocano
11. Bhikkhu Sanu Maharajano
12. Bhikkhu Santamano Dhwajjoshi
13. Bhikkhu Suman Dhwajjoshi
14. Bhikkhu Bijit Khemasakko
15. Bhikkhu Supreme Shakyavanso

Samaneras

1. Samanera Buddharatna Maharjan
2. Samanera Dhammaratna Maharjan
3. Samanera Bipin Maharjan
4. Samanera Prajwal Shakya
5. Samanera Ukesh Sakya
6. Samanera Gopi Maharjan
7. Samanera Sudip Deshar
8. Samanera Sudat Deshar
9. Samanera Deepi Maharjan
10. Samanera Ramit Shrestha
11. Samanera Anup Deshar
12. Samanera Suman Bajracharya 'A'
13. Samanera Rajendra Deshar
14. Samanera Kapila Maharjan
15. Samanera Arbin Shakya
16. Samanera Kabindra Bajracharya
17. Samanera Ujjawal Shakya
18. Samanera Satish Shakya
19. Samanera Bimal Gurung
20. Samanera Surya Gurung
21. Samanera Sameer Maharjan
22. Samanera Anup Shakya
23. Samanera Arjun Magar
24. Samanera Kiran Desahar
25. Samanera Dipesh Shrestha
26. Samanera Tejendra Tamang
27. Samanera Ashim Shakya
28. Samanera Jalap Bajracharya
29. Samanera Arya Dev Bajracharya

30. Samanera Sudarshan Maharjan
31. Samanera Sangharatna
32. Samanera Suman Bajracharya ‘B’
33. Samanera Kijan Maharjan
34. Samanera Ramesh Maharjan
35. Samanera Niroj Maharjan
36. Samanera Jen Maharjan
37. Samanera Denish Bajracharya
38. Samanera Pritam Bahadur Shakya
39. Samanera Abhishek Shakya
40. Samanera Bishal Shakya
41. Samanera Sajal Shakya
42. Samanera Suraj Bhakta Shrestha
43. Samanera Dinesh Chaudhary
44. Samanera Shiv Swatantra Tharu
45. Samanera Sambhu Lal Khang
46. Samanera Buddharatna Chaudhary
47. Samanera Mukesh Chaudhary

II. Myanmar (Burma)

1. Bhikkhu Panavimala
2. Bhikkhu Dhyanratna
3. Bhikkhu Adiccho
4. Bhikkhu Vimalbuddhi
5. Bhikkhu Shobhan
6. Samanera Amato
7. Samanera Jutimma
8. Samanera Buddhapiyo
9. Samanera Kavindo
10. Samanera Nagasena
11. Samanera Gyanavudho

III. Taiwan(ROC) 1. Bhikkhu Mangala 2. Bhikkhu Vazirbuddhi

IV. Australia **1.** Bhikkhu Upatissa

V. India 1. Bhikkhu Dharmajyoti 2. Bhikkhu Ashokakirti 3. Bhikkhu Narawang Tamang

VI. United kingdom 1. Bhikkhu Suman

VII. U.S.A. **1.** Bhikkhu Pragnaloka

VIII. Sri Lanka

1. Bhikkhu Nanda
2. Bhikkhu Vineeta
3. Bhikkhu Ashoka
4. Bhikkhu Triratna
5. Bhikkhu Sagara
6. Bhikkhu Sankicca
7. Bhikkhu Vajirasiri
8. Bhikkhu Sarada

9. Bhikkhu Veenit
10. Bhikkhu Ratana
11. Bhikkhu Tissa
12. Bhikkhu Vajira
13. Bhikkhu Pannawimal
14. Bhikkhu Medhankar
15. Bhikkhu Pannasara

SARAMANERAS:

1. Saranankara
2. Piyadassi
3. Samita
4. Narada 'A'
5. Piyaratna
6. Kusala
7. Lakkhana
8. Udit
9. Vibekanada
10. Pannananda
11. Mettananda
12. Chandananda
13. Yassari
14. Upali
15. Subodhi
16. Mahanama
17. Kashyapa
18. Dhammapala
19. Narada 'B'
20. Nalaka 'A'
21. Daywasa
22. Dil Bhadra
23. Chandima
24. Nalaka 'B'
25. Aloka
26. Suwarna
27. Subodh
28. Udena
29. Sangharatna 'A'
30. Gyanendra
31. Khema
32. Soma 'A'
33. Punna
34. Panna Ransi
35. Soma 'B'
36. Santa 'A'
37. Kapila Wansa
38. Asita Wansa
39. Sumanananda 'a'
40. Vijitananda
41. Khemananda
42. Silananda
43. Medhananda
44. Somaratna
45. Soratha
46. Pragyananda
47. Santa Sobhana
48. Santa Siddhartha
49. Santa Maitri
50. Santa Kosala
51. Santa Sakya
52. Suvaca
53. Sukama Sila
54. Siddhartha
55. Nanda 'A'
56. Rahula
57. Sudheera
58. Kosala Dheera
59. Panna Wansa
60. Jina Wansa
61. Mahinda
62. Nanda 'B'
63. Seewali
64. Mahapantha
65. Assaji
66. Sarada
67. Sumana
68. Sumangala
69. Santa Citta
70. Yasa
71. Dhamma Kitti
72. Panna Kitti
73. Santa Dheera
74. Vijitananda
75. Sumanananda 'b'
76. Vajra Bodhi
77. Dhammika
78. Santa 'B'
79. Anuruddha
80. Sumana 'B'
81. Jinavamsa
82. Panna Vansa
83. Buddha Ratna
84. Dhamma Ratna
85. Ariya Ratna
86. Sila Ratna
87. Sangha Ratna 'B'
88. Ananda
89. Piyadassi 'B'

List of Anagarikas studying in abroad

I. Thailand

1. Anagarika Sirisuta Maharjan
2. Anagarika Ramsobha Shrestha
3. Anagarika Sunita Napit

II. Myanmar

1. Anagarika Javanvati
2. Anagarika Vimalajnani
3. Anagarika Ambika
4. Anagarika Buddhapali
5. Anagarika Darshana
6. Anagarika Agrajnani
7. Anagarika Nandavati 'b'

III. India

1. Anagarika Rupashila

IV. Taiwan

1. Anagarika Pannavati
2. Anagarika Sani
3. Anagarika Nima

V. Sri Lanka

1. Anagarika Pannawati
2. Anagarika Mettawati
3. Anagarika Keshawati
4. Anagarika Prasnnawati
5. Anagarika Sukhawati
6. Anagarika Shobhawati
7. Anagarika Subhadra
8. Anagarika Shraddhagautami
9. Anagarika Upananda
10. Anagarika Shantawati
11. Anagarika Suciwati

Appendix III
Residences of Theravādin Monks in Nepal

01. Abhinava Buddha Vihara, Lumbini.
    1) Bhikkhu Vimalananda Mahathera. 2) Samanera Sunanda.
02. Anandakut Vihara, Swayambhu, Kathmandu.
    1) Bhikkhu Kumara Kassapa Mahathera,
2) Bhikkhu Dharmamurti, 3) Samanera Kondanya,
    4) S. Prajnaratna, 5) S. Asoka, 6) S. Kumarjeeva, 7) S. Assaji.
03. Bauddha Samaskrita Vihara, Bhaktapur.
    1) Bhikkhu Dharmashobhana Mahathera.
04. Bodhicharya Vihara, Banepa.
    1) Bhikkhu Bodhisena Mahathera, 2) Samanera Bodhideepa.
05. Buddha Vihara, Bhrikuti Mandap-Kathmandu.
    1) Bhikkhu Kondanya, 2) Bhikkhu Sushil,
    3) Samanera Anuyoga, 3) S. Javana, 4) S. Udena.
06. Buddha Vihara, Biratnagar. 1) Bhikkhu Aloka.
07. Buddha Vihara, Dharan.
    1) Bhikkhu Maitri (Tamang), 2) Bhikkhu Chhavikirti.
08. Chatubrahma Vihara, Matatirtha.
    1) Bhikkhu Thansettho, 2) Bhikkhu Samyakaratna,
    3) Bhikkhu Bodhananda.
9. Charumati Stupa Vihara, Chabahil, Kathmandu.
    1) Bhikkhu Tapassi Dhamma.
10. Dharmacakra Ashrama, Bagbazar, 1) Bhikkhu Milinda.
11. Dharmashila Buddha Vihara, Pokhara.
    1) Bhikkhu Subhadda, 2) Bhikkhu Saddhananda.
12. Dhyanakuti Vihara, Banepa.

1) Bhikkhu Ashwaghosha Mahathera,

2) Bhikkhu Rahul, 3) Samanera Gautama.

13. Gana Maha Vihara, Kathmandu.

1) Sanghanayaka Bhikkhu Subodhanand Mahathera,

2) Bhikkhu Sobhita,

3) Bhikkhu Samvegakirti,

4) Samanera Sugatananda,

6) S. Chandananda,

7) S. Somananda,

8) S. Sumanavamsha,

9) S. Somavamsha,

10) S. Sumanasiri.

14. Ilayabahi,Tanabaha, Patan.

1) Bhikkhu Vimalkirti.

15. International Bauddha Pariyatti Vihara, Butwal.

1) Bhikkhu Jatila, 2) Bhikkhu Bhaddiya 'B',

3) Samanera Jnanashree, 4) S. Jotika.

16. International Buddhist Society, Lumbini.

1) Bhikkhu Maitri Mahathera, 2) Samanera Mahapanta,

3) S. Vimala.

17. Jana Udaya Vihara, Sunakothi-Lalitpura.

1) Bhikkhu Dharmagupta.

18. Jitavana Vihara, Thankot.

1) Bhikkhu Dharmavamsha Mahathera,

2) Bhikkhu Sugatamuni Mahathera,

3) Samanera Sunita.

19. Kuti Vihara, Koteshwar-KTM.

1) Bhikkhu Yeshdhammo, 2) Samanera Wayamo,

3) S. Milindo, 4) S. Sunanalankara.

20. Manimandapa Mahavihara, Patan.

1) Bhikshu Shilbhadra Mahathera

2) Samanera Paduma, 3) S. Nayako.

21. Muni Vihara, Bhaktapur.

1) Samanera Tejendra, 2) S. Jalapa,

3) S. Asima, 4) S. Aryaputra.

22. Padma Sugandha Vihara, Kathmandu.

1) Bhikkhu Sumedha, 2) Samanera Sudatta.

23. Pati Vihara, Nagadesh-Bhaktapur. 1) Bhikkhu Varasambodhi.

24. Pranidhi Purna Maha Vihara, Balambu. 1) Samanera Sukha.

25. Pugatabhoomi Jetavana Vihara, Bhairahawa.

1) Samanera Jagaro, 2) S. Suvanno.

26. Purvaram Vihara, Dhulikhel. 1) Bhikkhu Gunaghosha Mahathero.

27. Sangharama Vihara, Kshetrapati, Kathmandu.

1) Bhikkhu Saddhatissa, 2) Bhikkhu Kolita,

3) Bhikkhu Sangharakshita.

28. Shakya Singha Vihara, Patan.

1) Bhikkhu Dharmapala Mahathera,

2) Bhikkhu Sunanda Mahathera, 3) Bhikkhu Dharmarakshita.

29. Shikhalapura Vihara, Dhulikhel.

1) Bhikkhu Dhammananda Mahathera.

30. Shree Kirti Vihara, Kirtipur.

1) Bhikkhu Kirtijyoti, 2) Bhikkhu Ananda,

3) Bhikkhu Prajnakirti, 4) Bhikkhu Dharmakirti,

5) Samanera Sundara, 6) Bhikkhu Pamit

7) S. Subhashkirti, 8) S. Uttarakirti.

31. Shreegha Vihara, Kathmandu.

1) Bhikkhu Dharmasagara, 2) Bhikkhu Medhankara.

32. Sudarshana Vihara, Banepa. 1) Bhikkhu Rastrapala.

33.Sumangala Vihara, Patan.

1) Sanghaupanayaka Bhikkhu Buddhaghosha Mahathera,

2) Bhikkhu Shobhan, 3) Bhikkhu Prajnaratna.

34. Surya Mangala Vihara, Kapilvastu. 1) Bhikkhu Suryamangala.

35. Tokha Buddha Vihara, Kathmandu.

1) Samanera Shobhana, 2) S. Jnanodaya.

36. Veluvanarama Vihara, Thecho-Lalitpura.

1) Samanera Uttama, 2) S. Chandimo.

37. Vishwa Shanti Vihara, New Baneshwar, Kathmandu.

1) Bhikshu Jnanapurnik Mahathera, 2) Bhikshu Bodhijnana,

3) Bhikshu Nigrodha, 4) Bhikshu Udayabhadra.

Samaneras :

1) S. Janak,	12)S. Dharmaghosha,	23) S. Bhanusarana,
2) S. Sujat,	13) S. Nagita,	24) S. Saddhadeepa,
3) S. Obhaso,	14) S. Vinaya,	25) S. Kittimo,
4) S. Subhaddo,	15) S. Suchitta,	26) S. Janeyyo,
5) S. Nandiyo,	16) S. Sudatto,	27) S. Adicca,
6) S. Mahindo,	17) S. Nemindo,	28) S. Kosalla,
7) S. Pajjoto,	18) S. Rohito,	29) S. Nyanuttara,
8) S. Aloka,	19) S. Jayanto,	30) S. Bhaddaco,
9) S. Buddhadatta,	20) S. Meghiyo,	31) S. Pabhassaro,
10) S. Panita,	21) S. Indriyo,	32) S. Uttaro.
11) S. Kashyapa,	22) S. Suppamedho,	

38. Yampi Maha Vihara, Patan. 1) Bhikkhu Bhaddiya.

39. Non residencial Monks:

1) Bhikshu Samyaka Sambodhi Pranputra,

2) Bhikshu Dhyanratna,

3) Bhikkhu Chandragupta, Balambu.

Appendex IV

Present Anagarikas and resident in NEPAL

01. Amarapura Vihara, Bungamati.

1) Anagarika Charujnani, 2) A. Sunita,
3) A. Palitajnani, 4) A. Pamitajnani,
5) A. Padumajnani, 6) A. Rupawati.

02. Bauddha Samaskrit Vihara, Bhaktapur.

1) Anagarika Sanghashila

03. Buddha Vihara,Dharan.

1) Anagarika Sumedhavati, 2) A. Sushilavati.
3) A. Kanchana, 4) A. Shasanavati

04. Bauddha Rishi Mahapragya Ashram, Anamnagar.

1) Anagarika Prajnavati.

05. Chatubrahma Vihara, Matatirtha. 1) Anagarika Anu.

06. Dhammavasa Vihara, Khusibun.

1) Anagarika Krishgautami, 2) A. Suchita,
3) A. Shilgautami, 4) A. Kshantigautami,
5) A. Shyamavati.

07. Dharmakirti Vihara, Naghal-Kathmandu.

1) Anagarika RatnaManjari,
2) A. Dhammavati,
3) A. Dhammadinna (Chameli),
4) A. Anupama,
5) A. Sanghavati,
6) A. Khemavati,
7) A. Indravati,
8) A. Jayavati,
9) A. Danavati,
10) A. Tyagavati
11) A.Viryavati,
12) A. Shubhavati,
13) A. Ramavati,
14) A. Surammavati,
15) A. Hemavati,
16) A. Suppabhavati,
17) A. Supriya,
18) A. Amata,
19) A. Vannavati,
20) A. Suvannavati.

08. Dharmashila Buddha Vihara, Pokhara. 1) Anagarika Karmashila.

09. Gautami Vihara, Lumbini.

1) Anagarika Sujata, 2) A. Khamesi.

10. Ilayabahi,Tana Baha, Lalitpur.

1) Anagarika Shilaparami, 2) A.Viryaparami,

3) A. Vineeta, 4) A. Shilachari,

11. Intenational Buddhist Meditation Centre, Shankhamul.

1) Anagarika Aggajnani, 2) A. Nirmalajnani

3) Shantarakshita.

12. Jaya Mangal Vihara,Tana Bahal-Patan.

1) Anagarika Vijita, 2) A. Nekkhami,

3) A. Chittavati

13. Jyoti Vihara, Chapagaun- Lalitpur.

1) AnagarikaVirygautami, 2) A. Upeskshagautami.

14. Kashivarna Buddha Vihara, Panuati. 1) Anagarika Satyaparami.

15. Kindol Vihara, Swayambhu.

1) A. Sumana, 4) A. Molini, 7) A. Shyamavati,

2) A. Uttara. 5) A. Dhammavijaya,

3) A. Sumitra, 6) A. Tejavati,

16. Kunsa Baha,Hyumat. 1) Anagarika Patachari, 2) A.Umavati.

17. Mahabodhi Vihara, Tansen. 1) Anagarika Revati (Dhammadinna).

18. Muni Vihara, Bhaktapur. 1) A. Sugandhavati, 2) A. Padmavati.

19. Narsinharama, Thaina-Patan.

1) A. Jnanashila, 2) A.Satyashila, 3) A.Shilavati,
4) A. Yeshavati, 5) A. Dharani, 6) A. Jeenvati,

7) A. Shilpavatisushma.

20. Padmachaitya Vihara, Butwal. 1) A. Udayashila, 2) A. Santiwati.

21. Padmakirti Vihara, Kamalpokhari.

1) Anagarika Kamala, 2) A. Karunavati,

3) A. Pabbhavati, 4) A. Dhyanavati,
5) A. Bhavanavati.

22. Prajnanandarama, Okubahal-Patan. 1) Anagarika Jnanavati.

23. Pranidhipurna Mahavihara, Balambu.
1) A. Mudita, 2) A. Chandrashila 'B'.

24. SangharakshitaVihara, Patan.
1) Anagarika Abhaya, 2) A. Chandrashila,
3) A. Shilachari,

25. Shanti Sukhavasa, Chakupat-Patan. 1) A. Utpalavarna (Chini).

26. Shree Kirti Vihara, Kirtipur. 1) Anagarika Mina.

27. Sunandarama,Thaina-Patan.
1) A Madhavi, 2) A.Masukhi, 3) A. Mashobha,
4) A. Mashraddha, 5) A. Masudha,

28. Sulakshanakirti Viahara, Kirtipur.
1) A. Anoja, 2) A. Atula, 3) A. Anula.

29. Sangharama Vihara,Dhalko-KTM. 1) Anagarika Dharmarakshita.

30. Vishwashanti Vihara, New Baneshwar
1) A. Shubha, 2) A. Khema, 3) A. Sudhamma.

31. Vishwashanti Dharmakirti Vihara, Basundhara.
1) A. Dhajavati (Kusum), 2) A. Padmavati, 3) A. Bhadravati.

32. Residing other Anagarikas:
1) Anagarika Chandrajnani, Patan.
2) A. Sraddhavati, Shankhamul.
3) A. Amaravati, Patan.
4) A. Dhammachari, Patan.
5) A. Nanda, Thasi.

Appendix V

Sanghamahanayakas of Nepal

1. Ven. Pragyanand Mahasthavir 1930 – 1993 A.D.
2. Ven. Sakyananda Mahasthavir 1993 - 1997 A.D.
3. Ven. Aniruddha Mahasthavir 1997 - 2002 A.D.
4. Ven. Subodhananda Mahasthavir 2002 - 2006 A.D.

Some Prominent Personalities in the Theravada Movement[1]

Amritananda, Bhikkhu (1918-1990) original name Lal Kaji Sakya from Tansen west Nepal, he ordain as a novice in 1936 from ven. Chandramani in Kusinagara. He studies and was ordained a monk in Sri Lanka in 1940. He return to Nepal in 1942 and preached first publicly in Kathmandu. He formed Dharmodaya Sabha in 1944 and All Nepal Bhikkhu Mahasangha in 1951 and remained its unchallenged leader until his death. He was well known and traveled widely outside of Nepal because of his dynamism and charisma. He was also one of the greatest Buddhist scholars and writers of Nepal.

Aniruddha, Bhikkhu (1915-2003) original name Gaja Ratna Tuladhar, son of Dasa Ratna Sahu (Later Ven. Dhammaloka). He went to Sri Lanka in 1930 and ordained as samanera and studied there. He had served many years in Lumbini and third Sanghanayaka of Nepal.

Ashwaghosh, Bhikkhu (1926- present) original name Buddha Ratna Sakya and became a novice in 1944 and went to Sri Lanka for study, where he took higher ordination in 1949. he is known as 'the communist monk' and was a nominee of the Unified Marxist-Leninist party, one of Nepal's two main political parites in the 1990s, to the Upper House 1993-5. He had established nepal's first Bhikkhu Training Center at Sangharama Dhalko and became abbot of this vihara. Presently he is abbot of Shrigha Vihara in Kathmandu and of Dyanakuti Vihara Banepa.

[1] Sarah Levine and David N. Gellner, Rebuilding Buddhism: The Theravada Movement in Twentieth Century Nepal, (UK: Harvard University Press, 2006), pp. 293-296

Buddhaghosh, Bhikkhu (1921- present day) original name Sapta Ratna Vajracharya in Kwa Baha, Kathamandu. The founder of Pariyatti Education in Nepal and presently acting Sanghanayaka of Nepal (2006) and abbot of Sri Sumangala Vihara in Lalitpur.

Chandramani, Bhikkhu (1876-1972): a Burmese monk who spent his life in Kusinagara, where he worked for the propagation of Buddhism until his death. He initiated with most of the early Nepalese Theravadins Monks and Nuns. He was the first president of Dharmodaya Sabha and father of Theravadins of Nepal.

Dharmachari, Anagarika (1898-1978): born Laxmi Nani Tuladhar, she impressed by Ven. Pragyananda in Kindol Vihara and took the precepts from Chandramani in Kusinagara in 1934 and most prominent Nepali nun. She founded the first nunnery in Nepal at Kindol Vihara in 1947.

Dhammaloka, Bhikkhu, (1891-1977): born Das Ratna Tuladhar, Asan, kathamandu. He traded in Lhasha, went to Sri Lanka and taught Buddhism as a layman. Later became a monk in 1932 after his son, Aniruddha ordain in 1930. he established nepal's first Theravādin Vihara 'Ananda Kuti Vihar' in Kathmandu.

Dhammawati, Anagarika (1925- present day): born as Ganesh Kumari Sakya in Uku Baha lalitpur. She ordain too precepts from Ven. Chandramani in Kusinagara and renamed as Dhammavati in 1950. She went to Burma for study and return in 1963 after passed the Dhammacariya Examination. She was able to established Dhammakirti Nunnery Centre in 1965 and leader of the Theravādin Nuns. She has been re-ordained as Bhikkhuni according to Mahayana tradition.

Dharmaditya Dharmacharya (1902-1963): born as Jagat Man Vaidya in Chika Bahi, Lalitpur and the first Newar Buddhist modernist and the first newar cultural nationalist. He went to study in Calcutta where he became a follower of anagarika Dhammapala, the founder of Maha Bodhi Society. He had formed Buddhist revival foundation and published Buddhist magazines etc.

Nyanpurnika, Bhikkhu (1936- present day): Born as Hera Lal Sakya in Tansen. He studied with Buddhaghosh in Lalitpur, in Burma and in England. He is only monk who passed Dhammacariya examination

of Burma. He was the founder of Vishwa Shanti Vihara and Vishwa Shanti Bauddha sikkyalaya where train novices. He is a prominent translator and writer.

Kumar Kashyap, Bhikkhu (1926- present day): born as Krishna Man Sakya, he was one of those who exiled to India by the Ranas in 1944. He went to Study in Sri Lanka and hold nepal's first 'Tripitaka acarya'. Presently, he is president of All Nepal Bhikkhu Association and abbot of Ananda Kuti Vihara.

Mahapragya, Bhikkhu (1901-1979) born Prem Bahadur (Nani Kaji) Shrestha. He ordained into Tibetan tradition but exiled in 1926 and reordained as novice in Theravada tradition, one of the earlier Theravādin monks. He return to householderhood in Kalimpong in 1940s but then returned to Kathmandu as a Buddhist sage (Bauddha Rishi) in the 1960s, where he taught until his death.

Pragyananda, Bhikkhu (1900-1993): born as Kul Man Singh Tuladhar in Itum Baha, Kathmandu, a trader in Tibet where he met Ven. Mahapragya and impressed by him to ordained. He became a Tibetan Gelung *Karmasheel* in 1928 and two years later a Theravādin under Ven. Chandramani in Kusinagara in 1930. He was nepal's first Sanghamahanayaka and well respected monk.

Shakyananda, Bhikkhu (1909-1997): born as Chakra Dhan Sakya in Taksar, Bhojpur, East Nepal. He spent over forty years as a monk in Tansen outside the Kathmandu and second sanghamahanayaka of Nepal.

Subodhanand, Bhikkhu (1916-2006): bor as Kul Raj Sakya in Taksar, Bhojpur, East Nepal. He was one of the monks exiled by the Ranas in 1944. He was a prolific composer of Hymns in Nepal Bhasa. In 2003, as the most senior monk in Nepal, he was the fourth Sanghanayaka of Nepal.

Sudarshan, Bhikkhu (1934-2002): born as Rudra Raj Sakya in Uku Baha, lalitpur. He was famous a 'the boy monk.' For many years he was a lecturer in the culture Department of Tribhuvan University, a prolific writer, preacher and abbot of Sri Kirti Vihara, Kirtipur, which is became multi-cultural center and especially for Buddhist meetings and conferences. He was jailed for some months for Nepal Bhasa

activities in the Panchayat period. He was a campaigner on Buddhist issues, particularly to do with Lumbini.

Sumangal, Bhikkhu (1929-1999): born Bhakta Krishna Shilpakar in Lalitpur. He was famous as "Dollar bhante". He ordained in 1959 in Burma, obtained a master's degree in Buddhism from Rissho University, Japan, in 1972, and was among the first monks to mobilize international connections for Buddhist projects in Nepal. He established Buddha Vihara in Bhrikuti Mandap, Kathmandu. He helped raise funds from Thailand and Japan for IBMc (1985), brought the Japanese healing movement Sei Mei Kyo to Nepal, and in 1993 opened an old people's home in Banepa.

Appendix VI



Kathmandu in Zoom



Glimpse of Theravādin activities in Nepal





Samanera ordination at Muni Vihara



Ordination Ceremony at Vishwa Shanti Vihara



Collecting Alms



Chanting Paritta in devotee's home



Giving Holy Thread to Devotees



Buddhist Art in Nepal









Main Buddha Image at Sri Kirti Vihara



Four holy places



BIOGRAPHY

Full Name : Phra Sujan Maharjan

Date of Birth : September 02, 1978

Place of Birth : Balambu, Kathmandu, Nepal

Address : Sri Kirti Vihar, Kathmandu, Nepal.

Ordination : Sujano Bhikkhu (S.M. Sujano)

Present Address : Wat Paknam- Bhasichareon, Bangkok, Thailand, 10160

Education and Experiences

1998 Level Sixth of Buddhist Studies in Nepal.
(Board 1st in Nepal Baudha Pariyatti Shikkya)

2003 BA Degree in Religion (Buddhasastra Pandita)
(Mahachulalongkorn University BKK in Board 2nd)

2002 - 4 Teach Buddhism in English for Class Six (Pathom 6)
(Wat Chanasongram School, BKK)

1996 Teach Basic Buddhism for 1st level students
(Sri Pranidhi Purnamahavihar, Balambu, Nepal)

1997 Teach Basic Buddhism for level 2, 3 & 4 students
(Sri Kirti Vihar, Kirtipur, Kath., Nepal)

1999- A Writer and translator Buddhist Articles into Nepali and Newari languages for Buddhist Monthly Journals